Shoreline

Vol. 17, No. 6 • June/July 2010

For the Members of the Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture at Salisbury University

More Building Blocks of Delmarva

Salisbury
UNIVERSITY

**EDWARD H. NABB RESEARCH CENTER
FOR DELMARVA HISTORY & CULTURE**
1101 Camden Ave.
Salisbury, Maryland 21801
phone: 410-543-6312
fax: 410-677-5067
e-mail: rcdhac@salisbury.edu
http://nabbhistory.salisbury.edu

The Nabb Board

Gary V. Outten, Chair
Pocomoke, MD

L. Paul Morris Jr., Vice Chair
Salisbury, MD

Michael Hitch, Secretary
Salisbury, MD

Carolyn Adkins
Mardela Springs, MD

Charles Emery
North East, MD

Margaret Genvert
Salisbury, MD

Lenore Huffer
Berlin, MD

Eleanor Mulligan
Salisbury, MD

Kathryn Niskanen
Washington, DC

Dan Parsons
Seaford, DE

Melanie Perreault
Salisbury, MD

Sandra Quillin,
Bishopville, MD

Elizabeth Ragan
Salisbury, MD

Diane Savage
Berlin, MD

Michael Scott
Salisbury, MD

Clara Small
Salisbury, MD

Connie Strott
Salisbury, MD

Patricia Taylor
Salisbury, MD

Charles C. Thornton Sr.
Burkittsville, MD

Andrea Ullrich
Heathsville, VA

Lloyd Whitehead
Salisbury, MD

Robert Withey
Cape Coral, FL

Gordon E. Wood Sr.
Ocean View, DE

Emeritus:

E. Niel Carey
Ellicott City, MD

Thomas H. Fooks V
Wilmington, DE

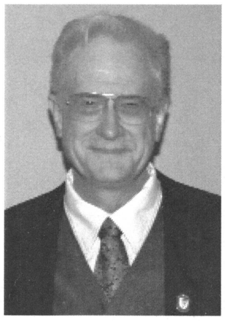
John E. Jacob Jr.
Ft. Myers, FL

George W. Gering, Jr.
Salisbury, MD

Dr. G. Ray Thompson, Director
Salisbury, MD

In a Word

By Dr. G. Ray Thompson



The past year has seen considerable changes in our staffing. By the beginning of last year, we had lost our Research Room coordinator to a "freeze" in hiring. This June, we lost another veteran employee, Iris Powell, our library technician, who retired after 13 years of dedicated service. It is our hope that both positions will be re-instated as the economy improves.

Fortunately, Dr. Alice Bahr, dean of libraries, has jumped in to help Nabb by "loaning" us Blackwell Library staff members to assist with cataloging, binding and Web design. At the same time, our own part-time staffers and volunteers have stepped forward to assist us in keeping the Nabb functioning. Heather Burnham has picked up many of the duties related to public relations, Nabb events and our publications, including the *Shoreline.* Denise Horner is dedicating time to familiarizing herself with the reading room monographs and preparing monographs for binding and dealing with cataloging concerns. Pat Taylor, who has for years served as volunteer coordinator and family history researcher, is currently curating an exhibit on "Faces of the Eastern Shore," which will be mounted in one of our galleries in late August. Our three full-time staff members are irreplaceable. David Ranzan, our archivist, has turned much of his attention this past year to archiving the vast Perdue Collection for the Perdue School of Business, while at the same time serving as University archivist and "worker bee," organizing the Nabb Center's rapidly-growing archival collections. Aaron Horner, research assistant, continues to work with the public and with University classes in the Reading Room, and to mine original sources for databases needed by our researchers. Donna Messick, our office manager, is the glue that holds the Nabb Center together. Not only does she take care of Nabb finances and correspondence, but she also may be found assisting patrons, accessioning artifacts and new collections, curating Nabb exhibits, and, in general, making certain that the Nabb functions smoothly on a daily basis. Finally, a faithful cadre of volunteers continues to assist our staff in a thousand and one ways to maintain the academic mission of the Nabb Center. I am thankful for a wonderful staff, always pleasant to work with—a staff that is fully engaged and recognizes the importance of the educational mission of the Nabb Center. Please come by to do research, look at an exhibit or to volunteer!

The primary subject of this issue of *Shoreline* is architecture. Obviously the subject is one that pulled at the heartstrings of our contributors as it did ours; therefore, you hold in your hand a second issue on that subject. The articles herein demonstrate a variety of ways in which architecture may be interpreted—from a glossary of local architectural features, to personal memories of a beloved structure, to tracking a family's Eastern Shore dwelling habits over a three hundred year period of time. In the future we are planning issues relating to Eastern Shore transportation and communication, Delmarva agriculture, seafood and economic life, and on Delmarva folkways and traditions. If you are interested in submitting an article on any of the subjects above, please drop us a line.

Submissions

The Nabb Research Center is always interested in articles on the history, culture or heritage of the Delmarva region. If you or anyone you know is interested in writing for *Shoreline*, please send material, proposals, suggestions or comments to the attention of the "Newsletter Editor" as follows:

Nabb Research Center
Salisbury University
1101 Camden Ave.
Salisbury, MD 21801-6860

Or by e-mail to rcdhac@salisbury.edu. Please include the words "Newsletter Editor" in the subject line.

Hours & Closings

READING ROOM HOURS:
Monday: 10 a.m.-8 p.m.
Tuesday-Friday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

GALLERY HOURS:
The galleries will re-open August 30.

CLOSINGS:
The Nabb Research Center will be closed Monday, September 6; Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, November 24-26; and Thursday, December 23-Friday, December 31.

Shoreline

Contents...

4 . . . . .*Bordeleau – 'A Fantastic Day'*

6 . . . . .*Spotlight on Collections*

7 . . . . .*Memoirs of a Farmhouse*

11 . . . .*A New Home for an Old House: The French House*

12 . . . .*Glossary of Federal and Victorian Vernacular Architecture in Historic Whitehaven*

17 . . . .*Seaford's Gubernatorial Mansion*

19 . . . .*Two and One Half Miles in 300 Years*

21 . . . .*Rackliffe House*

24 . . . .*The 19th Century American Letter as Literature*

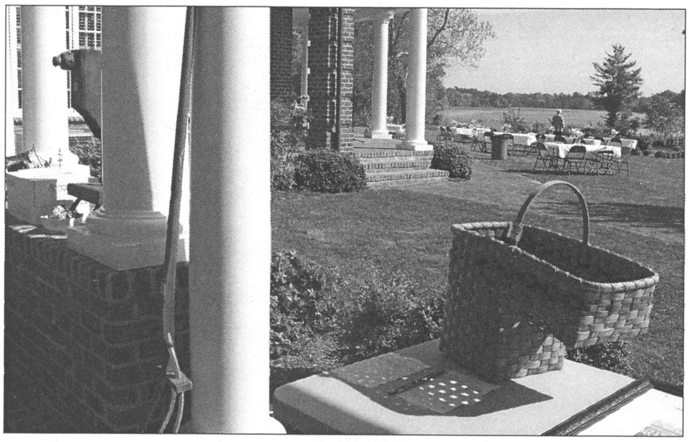
26 . . . .*A Tough Man Markets Tender Chickens*

28 . . . .*Read All About It: Newspapers as Mirrors of Local History*

30 . . . .*Amy Pritchett Anderson Waddelow Fooks*

32 . . . .*News, Events and Exhibits*

34 . . . .*Volunteer Corner*



4
Bordeleau – 'A Fantastic Day'

24
The 19th Century American Letter as Literature

7
Memoirs of a Farm House

Volume 17 No. 6 June/July 2010

Director and Founder, Dr. G. Ray Thompson. *Archivist*, David Ranzan. *Research Assistant*, T. Aaron Horner. *Office Manager*, Donna T. Messick. *Receptionist*, Denise Horner. *Assistant*, Heather Burnham. *Archival Assistant*, Julie Messick. *Graduate Assistant*, Matthew Hollis.

This issue and back issues of the *Shoreline* may be purchased for $15 each. Please contact us at 410-543-6312 or by e-mail at rcdhac@salisbury.edu for details.

©2010 Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture at Salisbury University. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. Any views or opinions expressed in this newsletter are solely those of the individual authors and do not represent those of the Nabb Center or Salisbury University.
Shoreline is published by the Nabb Research Center, 1101 Camden Ave., Salisbury University, MD, 21801. Printed in the USA by the Publications Office, Salisbury University, Salisbury, MD.

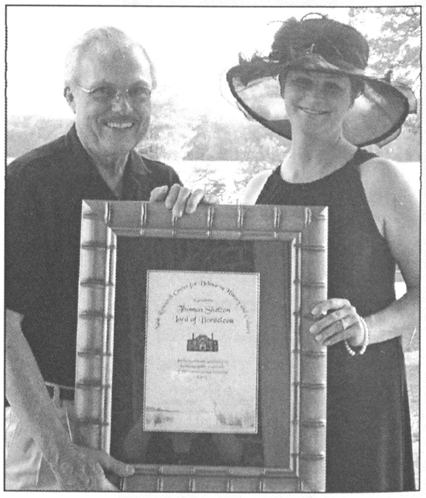
About the Front Cover:
The photograph is of the grounds of Bordeleau Winery as it overlooks Wicomico Creek, in Wicomico County, Maryland. It was taken in May, during our 2010 fundraiser.

Bordeleau - "A Fantastic Day!"

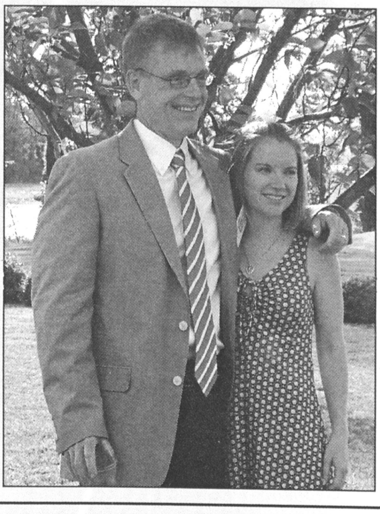
"Fantastic" is how board member and stalwart Nabb supporter Bert Thornton described our 2010 fundraising event on the gorgeous grounds of Bordeleau Winery in Wicomico County. If success can be measured in mint juleps, then this year's fundraiser was notable. Bert and his wife Emma donated time, hard work and the requisite spirits, as they do every year, concocting an estimated 250-275 servings of the traditional beverage. Nabb Center members and their guests also enjoyed the fine wines of the Bordeleau Winery (generously made possible by Bill and Kathy Niskanen), which nicely complemented the exceptional food prepared by the famous Waterman's Inn of Crisfield. This splendid gathering was held at the stately residence of vintner Tom Shelton, owner of Bordeleau, on beautiful Wicomico Creek.

Everyone's generosity and hard work resulted in approximately $15,500 in much-needed funds for the Nabb Research Center. Our gratitude goes out to each and every one of you. Special thanks to the Nabb Research Center board members, Nabb staff members and student assistants for making this one of our most successful fundraisers yet.

It was a lovely day for a lively event, with upbeat music provided by The Jazz Guys trio. Thank you to board member Charles Emery, who made it possible, and to Connie Strott, who arranged for the group's appearance.



Bordeleau owner Tom Shelton was presented with a certificate naming him "Lord of Bordeleau."



Board member Mike Hitch, here with wife Jonna, helped bring the event into the 21st century by creating a Facebook page for this year's fundraiser, linking it to a Web page for the silent auction catalog and to both the Nabb Center's and Bordeleau's home pages.

Bordeleau Event Contributors

Michael Abercrombie Sr.
Kevin Adams
Carolyn Adkins
Chris Alexander
Diane Allen
Page Austin
Alice Bahr
Joe Ballou
Bonnie B. Barnidge
Christie Barrett
Harry Basehart
Kathy Berezoski
Ann Bernier
Rose Brous
Michael Buchness
Jane Bunting
Heather Burnham
Charles Capute
Niel Carey
Marie Cavallaro
Paul Clappison
Anne Clay
Richard Culver
Cynthia Curran
Dennis Dempsey
Carole A Dewitt
John Donohue
JoAnne Donovan
Nancy Dorman
John Dryden
Charles Dryden
Henry Edwards Jr.
Charles Emery
John Farquhar
Greg Felthousen
Sandra Frazier
Peggy Genvert
George Gering
Harold Gordy
Donald Graham
Martin Gunby
Henry Hanna
Robert Highfield
Mike Hitch
Harry Holcomb III
G. Thomas Holder
Lenore Huffer
Linda Hulburd
Michael James
Julia Johnson
Bruce Jones
Timothy Keeports
Bernice Kelly
Jan Knode
William Krabill
Dae Kuczma
Pearl Layton
Michael LeCompte
Lloyd B. Lewis
Carol Lewis
John Lynch
Paul Marshner
Joan Matyiko
Donna Messick
George Miller
Daniel Moore
L. Paul Morris Jr.
Eleanor Mulligan
Barry Neville
Edward Niemann Jr.
Kathryn W. Niskanen
Elsie Northam
Edward Otter
Gary Outten
Todd Outten
Patty Parks
Dan Parsons
Melanie Perreault
Dorothy Pinto
John F. Polk
Rick Pollitt
Aaron Pulhamus
J.D. Quillin
Elizabeth Ragan
Sophia A. Riehl
Louis Rimbach
Emily Russell
Mary Sadler
Ricks Savage
Charles Schaefer
Marilyn Seidel
William Shettle
Ann Showell
Clara Small
SoBo's Wine Bistro
Karen Silverstrim
Tony Sposato
Walter Stansell
Clara Stephens
Connie Strott
Steve Strunck
Ann Suthowski
Don Taylor
Janet Taylor
Patricia Taylor
Don Taylor
Janet Taylor
Rosemary Thomas
G. Ray Thompson
Nevins Todd Jr.
Bert Thornton
James Trader
Andrea Ullrich
Verba P. Valentine
Joanne Vaughan
Mia Vye
Kristen Walton
Amy Waters
Elizabeth Waud
Russ Weber
Walter West
George White
Lloyd Whitehead Jr.
Lloyd Whitehead Sr.
Edgar Williams
Thomas Wimbrow
Robin Wolinski
Gordon Wood
Martha Zimmerman
WBOC -TV

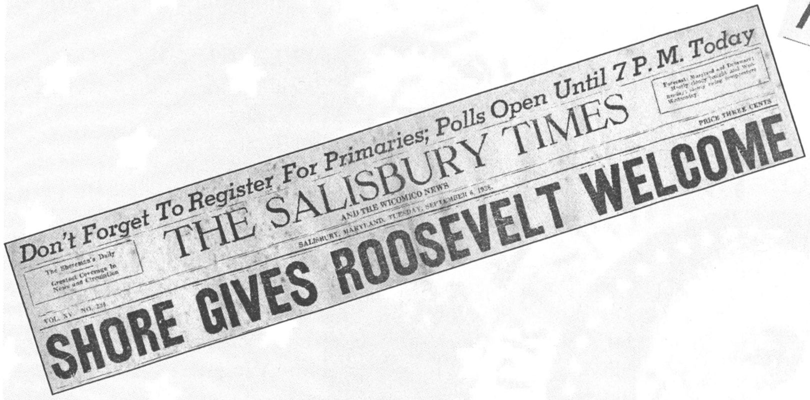
Director Dr. G. Ray Thompson and board member Dan Parsons.

J.C. Taylor, Bob Highfield, Barbara Emery and Susan Highfield.

Niel and Helen Carey with Eleanor Mulligan.

Spotlight on Collections:

FDR Visits Salisbury, Online!



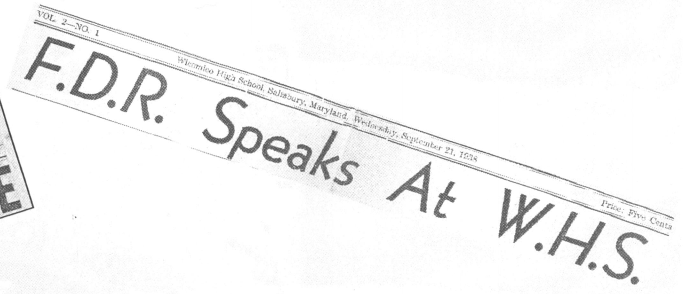
Don't Forget To Register For Primaries; Polls Open Until 7 P. M. Today

The Shoreman's Daily
Greatest Coverage In News and Circulation

THE SALISBURY TIMES
AND THE WICOMICO NEWS
SALISBURY, MARYLAND, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1938.

PRICE THREE CENTS

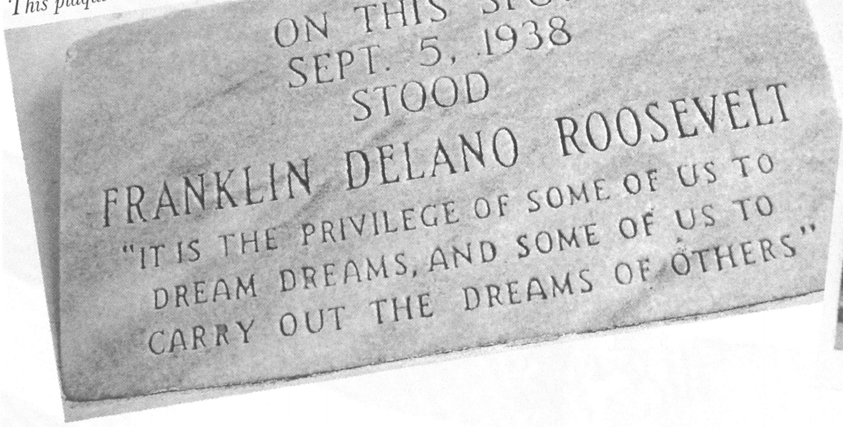
SHORE GIVES ROOSEVELT WELCOME



VOL. 2—NO. 1
Wicomico High School, Salisbury, Maryland, Wednesday, September 21, 1938
Price: Five Cents

F.D.R. Speaks At W.H.S.

PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT


ON THIS SPOT
SEPT. 5, 1938
STOOD
FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT
"IT IS THE PRIVILEGE OF SOME OF US TO
DREAM DREAMS, AND SOME OF US TO
CARRY OUT THE DREAMS OF OTHERS"

This plaque stands across from the courthouse in Denton, Maryland.

The Nabb Research Center is proud to present an online interactive exhibit on President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Labor Day visit to the Eastern Shore in 1938. The motive for the visit was simple: the Democratic Party had recently become split over the next Maryland Congressional election between Roosevelt loyalist David Lewis and New Deal critic Millard Tydings. The exhibit contains an animated journey of FDR's many greet-and-meets, and each slide of animation is accompanied by brief text summaries of the events that occurred at each stop. The project was begun in fall 2009, using historical newspaper clippings from the Wicomico Historical Society Collection. The digital exhibit was added to the Nabb Center Web site in December. The Web-based animation of FDR's car ride was done by student assistant Matthew Griffin, and the speech recreation and accompanying text were done by graduate assistant Matthew Hollis. The entire project was conducted under the supervision of SU Archivist David Ranzan.

Though this visit heralded the upcoming Congressional elections and it was quite rare for a U.S. president to visit Delmarva, the 1938 visit was not President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's first. Four years earlier, he made an unexpected visit to the Eastern Shore. Roosevelt traveled from Washington across the Chesapeake Bay aboard the *U.S.S. Sequoia*, landed in Crisfield and proceeded to tour various architectural wonders. These structures included the Colonial homes of Makepeace, in Somerset County, Beverly Mansion, near Pocomoke City in Worcester County, and the All Hallows Episcopal Church in Snow Hill, Worcester County. Little did the citizens of Crisfield or the Eastern Shore know that the president would return during his second term. Impressed by the historic architecture, rich religious tradition and amiable locals, Roosevelt decided to make a second visit in 1938.

Memoirs of a Farmhouse: Hollywood Plantation of Quantico, Maryland

by Jan Knode

The French family.

Little has been written about the many plantations that dotted the landscape southwest of Salisbury in the 18th and 19th centuries. That land, nestled between the Nanticoke and Wicomico rivers and their tributaries, is unique in the fact that many different soil types can be found. It was this diversity of soil that made the area suitable for growing a wide variety of crops. The rivers made getting those crops to market easier.

In fall 1910, James A. French moved his wife, Ada, their seven children and Ada's father, Jacob H. Maxwell, from Harrold, South Dakota, to Hollywood Plantation (now known as Poplar Hill Farm) near Quantico, Maryland. James and Ada French were my great-grandparents. They had farmed their land in the Dakota Territories for over 20 years, much more than the time required by the Homestead Act to obtain possession of the land, but they were eager to leave the harsh winters behind for a warmer climate and more "friendly" farming conditions. James French had previously traveled to Maryland with a land agent friend and seen for himself the fertile farmlands. Land records show that he purchased the 700-acre farm from Adele Watt. He then arranged for his family, livestock, wagons, farm equipment and personal belongings to be transported to distant Maryland.

Hollywood Plantation must have looked quite grand to Ada and her children as they rode in their wagons up the long lane lined with stately cedar trees. In the distance surrounding the plantation there was a large forest. The house itself was impressive. It sat on a small hill a bit to the right of a long drive and was built in three sections, the earliest of which still exists. It was a one-and-a-half story, early 18th-century, four-room structure that connected to a one-story, single-room structure that, in turn, connected to a two-story, seven-room structure. To the left of the house were two barns (one larger than the other), a windmill, cistern and powerhouse. To the right were small poultry houses for chickens, ducks, geese and turkeys, and an orchard of fruit trees. To the north of the house was Quantico Creek. I suspect that it was an awe-inspiring sight to Ada and her children who had lived so long in the barrenness of the Dakotas.

By the time I started visiting Hollywood Plantation, local people were calling it the "French Farm" and the two-story section of the house was by that time the only part in use. The rest of the house had been closed up. Aunt Carrie, Aunt Lizzie and Uncle Roy French were the only Frenchs then in residence, James and Ada French having both died in 1941. Uncle Roy had suffered severe frostbite during his service in World War I and had developed other ills as well. He spent most of his days sitting in the front room in solitude and died in 1947. Maxwell and Elmer French had both married and given up farming to be successful mechanics—Maxwell in Salisbury and Elmer in Quantico. Jay French had married and moved to Quantico but was still very much involved in the running of the farm.

My memories in the early 1940s are of a well-worn, once elegant home that had lots of places for a child to explore. The most vivid are of the huge kitchen. It was the biggest room in the house and also the focal point for the women of the family. It extended the full length of the two-story section and was almost half as deep. The north (outside) wall had two fireplaces big enough for an adult to walk into and the floor in front of the fireplaces was made of brick extending out in front for about four feet and was the full length between both. One fireplace had spits for roasting meat and the other had a trammel and crane for hanging pots with a double oven on each side. In the center of the room were a large wooden table used for cutting vegetables and a butcher's block for cutting meat. The south (inside) wall was lined with cupboards and there was a sink and pitcher pump. Several old chairs sat in various positions around the kitchen and a porch on the east side provided a place where one could sit in a rocker and look out over the Quantico Creek landscape. On a hot summer evening it was the perfect place to snap green beans or to shell peas or lima beans.

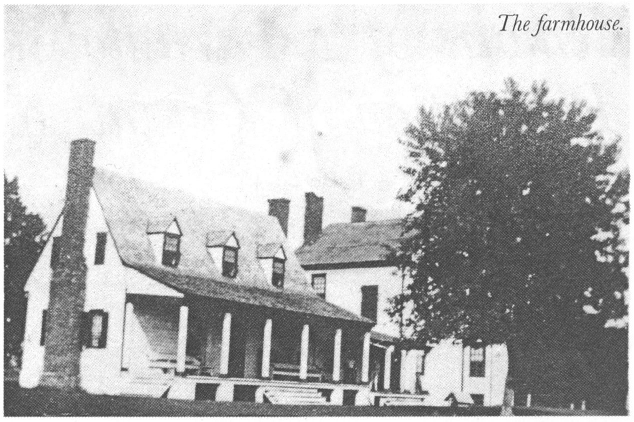
Aunt Carrie was in charge of the kitchen. In fact, I was convinced that Aunt Carrie was in charge of everything. She was a big woman and somber of character. One day when I was watching her shell peas (and trying to help), I asked her why there was a "lid" in the floor. She told me it was the trap door to the cellar where they kept the potatoes and other foods. In no uncertain terms I was told never to bother the "lid" in the kitchen floor or the one on the outside of the house that also went into the cellar. Of course, that made me even more curious—so I went to Aunt Lizzie.

Aunt Lizzie was the "character" of the family. She was as tall as Aunt Carrie but as thin as a rail and impish. According to Aunt Lizzie, the cellar had brick walls and a dirt floor. Because of the iron rings in the wall, it was thought that part of the cellar had been used at one time to hold rebellious slaves. There was also a tunnel leading from the cellar to the creek. Many tales were spun around that tunnel. Some said it was used for slave-running, others speculated about Patty Cannon, notorious for kidnapping free blacks and selling them into slavery and still others claimed it was used to move bootleg whiskey from boats on the creek. I think any or all of the tales may have been true at

Photos courtesy of Jan Knode.

some time or another. Several people have told me that rum-running was prevalent in the Quantico Creek area during prohibition because of the many tributaries that emptied into the Wicomico and Nanticoke rivers.

In addition to the kitchen, there were three other rooms on the first floor. The two rooms that joined the kitchen were side by side. The east room had once been used as a breakfast room. It was later used as a parlor of sorts and was the "home" of Aunt Carrie's organ that sat next to the stairs to the second floor. One of my favorite things to do was to play the organ; I could barely pick out the tunes but Aunt Carrie and Aunt Lizzie sang along and pretended I was wonderful.


The farmhouse.

The room alongside the parlor was closed off and used for storage. The front room had a "bay" front and was used as a sitting room. Windows on the three sides of the "bay" gave a lovely view of the lawn, fields and long, tree-lined lane.

The second floor had two large bedrooms and another "bay" room that had been converted into a bathroom. Each of the bedrooms had a fireplace. In one of the bedrooms a safe had been discovered hidden in the baseboard. No one knew why it was there or what its use had been. When I stayed for the weekend, I slept with Aunt Carrie in that bedroom. She had an elaborately decorated chamber pot—a new and unique experience for me. She said that, in winter, the bathroom had no heat and it was much too cold to "traipse" down the hall to the bathroom when the chamber pot was so handy.

A large dining room was the only room in the one-story structure adjoining the two-story section of the house. It not only served the needs of the family, but it was the site of many large dinners and parties. Aunt Carrie's organ once stood in that room and had provided entertainment for guests. Neighboring families would come for harvest dinners and occasional birthday parties. My mother remembered Halloween parties where everyone came in costume and danced while fiddlers played. The late Mr. Bounds Phillips told me about lambs that "old Mr. French" would slaughter for festivities and the tables of food the visiting families would bring to share.

This dining room was connected to a one-and-a-half-story structure, containing two rooms on the first floor and two rooms on the second with a stairway in the center. Each room had a fireplace. The upstairs rooms were used as bedrooms. I was told that one room was for Jacob Maxwell and the other for James and Ada French. The downstairs rooms were sitting rooms. There was also a cellar under this section of the house.

If you stood halfway down the lane and looked toward the house, to the far right were orchards of apple, peach and cherry trees. Closer to the lane was a large strawberry patch. These fruits were picked, each in its own season, and packed in baskets for shipment by boat to markets along the Chesapeake Bay. The farm had its own wharf on the far northwest corner of the property. Small boats would come into the Quantico Creek, load the produce and haul it to Sandy Hill Wharf on the Nanticoke River where it would be loaded on a steamboat bound for Baltimore Harbor.

Closer to the house was the garden that supplied food for the house. For a big family, picking, preparing, canning and preserving was a summer-long project.

Near the creek and on the northeast side of the house were the chickens, ducks and geese. The turkeys were kept on the northwest side of the house, near the barns. The chickens provided eggs and meat for the family; ducks, geese and turkeys were raised for market because they "fetched" a better price. Often the chickens would lay more eggs than the family could use so these, too, were taken to market.

The barns sat well away from the house. The large barn housed the livestock while the smaller barn housed the farm equipment and wagons. Behind the barns was the pigsty. In front of the barns and about one quarter of the way down the lane were a windmill, a large cistern and a powerhouse. The rest of the land from the barns to the road served as pasture for the livestock. The balance of the cleared land on the farm was planted in wheat and corn, crops that were familiar to James French from his farming days in the Dakotas.

In 1910, the manpower of the farm in those early days consisted of the French children. Caroline (Carrie), age 21, helped Ada with the household chores. Florence, my grandmother, age 18, groomed and exercised the horses and herded the cattle. Elizabeth (Lizzie), age 14, tended the chickens, geese and turkeys and, as she matured, hunted with the men and dressed the "kill" for the kitchen. Roy, age 16, Jay, age 12, Maxwell, age 10, worked the farm with James French. Elmer, age 7, was put to work wherever he was needed as his father determined. Since Great-great grandfather Jacob Maxwell was a blacksmith and teamster by trade, a blacksmith shop was soon built on the farm.

One would imagine that after the flat, barren bleakness of the Dakotas, the French family would have been in awe of the abundance of trees, the lush green grass of the pastures and the winding water of the creek. But there was work to be done. The family's belongings had to be unpacked and the necessary staples and supplies had to be purchased. Furthermore, the French family needed to get "the lay of the land."

A trip to the nearby village of Quantico was in order. Today, Quantico is considered a quaint village. However, when the French family arrived at Hollywood Plantation in 1910, Quantico was a bustling center of commerce. It was, in essence, the "shopping mall" of its day for the many farmers and their families. There were three general and dry-goods stores, one butcher store, and one ice cream parlor. These stores not only provided the everyday necessities but were an outlet for the eggs, butter, poultry and meat the farmers brought in, and it offered a social venue as well. While shopping for sugar, flour or whatever they needed, the ladies would chat with their neighbors for information on family happenings, who was getting married, who was having a baby, the weather, what kind of frocks they were making and so on. The men, of course, would discuss the weather, crops, livestock and wagon wheels. Friday and Saturday nights, the local farmers would gather to play cards at one of the stores or checkers at another store or dominoes at yet another store. Their wives probably gathered at the ice cream parlor for knitting, stitching and gossiping.

The Quantico Hotel was the place where the more affluent young gentlemen and ladies of the area gathered for a quiet supper and socializing. The hotel was famous for its delicious meals and hospitality. It was also the place where the local politicians would gather to tout their ambitions for office, select candidates and, when there was cause to celebrate, party.

The post office in Quantico was also an integral part of the community. Letters were the principal means of communication between the local farming families in order to keep each other informed of current or coming events. For the French family, the post was the way they kept in touch with family and friends left behind in South Dakota.

James French took possession of Hollywood Plantation on October 10, 1910, the perfect time for planting the winter crop of wheat. During the winter months, the orchards would need tending and spring would bring the planting time for corn.

When the wheat was ready for harvest in mid-June, a piece of equipment called a "binder" was used. The binder was powered by a gasoline engine and had two "arms" on the front. The binder would move along the rows of wheat while a man would walk on each side of the machine. When the arms were full, the men would grab the stalks and move them aside to be stacked. As those men moved aside to stack the stalks, two more men would take their place, one on each side of the binder and the process repeated. The stalks remained stacked for about a month. This gave the grain time to dry. When the grain was sufficiently dry, the stacks were loaded onto a wagon and hauled to a thresher. Two men would feed the stacks into the thresher, two men would stand at the chute and hold a burlap sack to catch the grain, and two more men would stand on the other side of the machine to catch and gather the stalks. These stalks (hay) were used as bedding for the livestock or for mulching around new planting beds.

It's interesting to note here that someone thought of a way to build these two machines together for what we know today as the combine. Today, the wheat is allowed to dry in the fields and is harvested in one process instead of two, which takes very little manpower.

The sacks of grain were loaded onto wagons and taken to Whitehaven, Wetipquin or Nanticoke where there were steamboat wharves. The roads to Sandy Hill Wharf were almost impassable for loaded wagons so most of its business came by way of small boats on the tributaries of the Nanticoke River. The steamboats that loaded in Salisbury and Whitehaven were the Victor Lynn and the Red Line. The steamboat that loaded at Nanticoke, Wetipquin and Sandy Hill was the Old Virginia. These steamboats primarily serviced Baltimore.

Corn was harvested in much the same way as the wheat. After the stacks had dried, the men would use a corn peg to shuck the ears of corn by hand. A corn peg was a leather strap about one-and-a-half inches wide that was shaped to fit around the palm of the hand with a heavy metal plate fastened to the palm side. The metal plate tapered to a prong that extended between the index finger and the thumb. The prong was inserted into the husk at the top of the ear of corn and pulled down. The shucked corn was put into baskets to be shipped or used on the farm as feed for the horses, chickens, geese and turkeys. The stalks were used as fodder.

Quantico Creek view.

In 1913, George P. Crockett (my grandfather) started courting Florence French. His family worked the farm that joined Hollywood Plantation on the west side. The Crocketts were tenant farmers for a man named Pappendick. George P. (as he was called) wrote almost daily letters to Florence. Those letters (which have been saved) had a very gentlemanly flair executed in beautiful penmanship and gave me a real look at the circumstances of those days. In one letter, he apologized to Florence for using a pencil because his brother Gus had borrowed his pen.

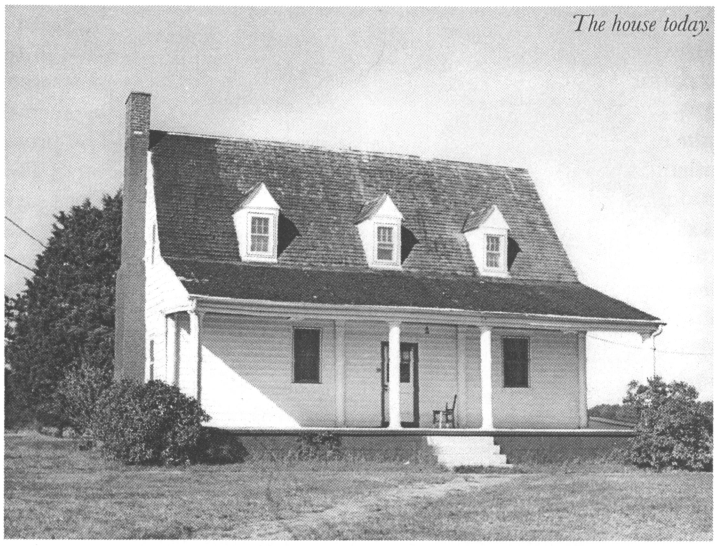
He made frequent trips to Salisbury, Quantico, Hebron, Whitehaven and sometimes Laurel, Delaware. I would guess he made those trips to broker crop deals for the local farmers since he elaborated very little on his travels but he did talk of buying fertilizer in Salisbury. The Farm Bureau Store, Farmers and Planters, V.V. Hughes, and William B Tilghman & Co. were located in Salisbury.

George P. Crockett and Florence French were soon being seen together at camp meetings, box and pie socials, muskrat dinners, and other events. They were married in spring 1917.

James French and his sons had always made their own cider, wine and brandy. I have been told that James French thought his dandelion wine would cure just about anything. Since Wicomico was a dry county, bootlegging was an established way of enterprise. With the passage of the Volstead Act in 1919 and the advent of prohibition in 1920, bootlegging boomed. The nooks and crannies of the Wicomico and Nanticoke Rivers made perfect havens for rumrunners.

Elmer French (the youngest of the French children) told me stories of how he would sit at the window in his bedroom at night and listen for voices on Quantico Creek. Then he would see lanterns and a bugeye (a masted oyster-dredging boat) loaded with barrels would glide silently by. I suspect that Uncle Elmer was more than an innocent observer. One time when I was visiting the farm, he took me out on the creek in his skiff and showed me all the twists and turns and cuts in the creek. The trees were thick and tall along both shores and the narrow sections of the creek had a dark and mysterious aura. It was easy to imagine the small boats gliding in the dark silence toward some unknown destination.

By 1920, Hollywood Plantation was a thriving farm and James French and his family were well established in the area. James had built a tenant house in the northwest section of the farm near the wharf and had hired a man and his family to help with the crops. Field workers were hired from around the community. The late Hayman Morris, a black gentleman whose grandparents had been slaves, worked in the fields alongside James French and Jacob Maxwell. Jacob was aging but still



The house today.

worked as long as he was able. Hayman told me: "Mr. French was a big, strong man who never said much but could do anything. Built his own binder. Pulled it with a pair of horses." Hayman was a boy when he started working for James French. He and the other workers were paid 5 cents an hour, which was a fair wage for those times. According to Hayman, if a man proved himself the wage was increased to 6 cents an hour.

Jacob Maxwell contributed a respectable income to the family by shoeing horses and repairing equipment in his blacksmith shop on the farm. He had taught his blacksmith and teamster trade to James French when they homesteaded in the Dakotas. A teamster in those days was a man who rented teams of horses and wagons to travelers. At times, a teamster would board and breed horses for a fee. While at Hollywood Plantation, he also instructed Elmer French in iron working and mechanics because Elmer had no interest in farming. This knowledge would prove to be quite useful after Jacob Maxwell died in 1922.

The economy started its decline before the big stock market crash of 1929. It had already begun to affect the farmers in the Quantico area and the Great Depression that followed brought more hardship. It became more difficult to get their crops to market and, when they did, prices were down. The brokers who bought the crops dwindled in number and competition among the farmers increased. Families relied more on each other, bringing the already close community even closer. The barter system became more prevalent. These farming families were inherently frugal because the fickleness of Mother Nature had taught them to be cautious.

James French had managed his money well and had an ample (so he thought) amount in reserve. He soon found it necessary to dip into his reserves in order to pay his field workers and tenant farmer. Soon that meant there was little to spare for maintenance and the house began to fall into disrepair. His prize breeding horses were sold to help make ends meet. Only the workhorses were kept. The cows, pigs and poultry were kept for milk, eggs and meat. The women continued to maintain the garden, but the orchards fell to neglect. Elmer French repaired equipment when needed and Jay French worked with James French in the fields. Roy French had come home from World War I having been exposed to frostbite and possibly poison gas. He was an invalid and unable to help. In spite of these hardships, the French family and their neighbors continued to work hard and struggled to maintain an adequate way of life.

James and Ada French did not live to see the rebound of the economy. James died in April 1941 and Ada died in July 1941. Franklin D. Roosevelt had put projects in place to help restore the economy but the real up-turn began with the United States' entry into World War II in December 1941.

After the deaths of James and Ada French, Jay French suggested that all but the two-story section of house be closed in order to save money. Jay continued to farm the land. Carrie and Lizzie maintained what was left of the orchards, reduced the size of the garden and kept what they could of the livestock and poultry.

The exact date of the fire that destroyed all but the original one-and-a-half-story section of the house is debatable. I have been told that it burned in 1947 or maybe 1948 but possibly 1949. No one has been able to say for sure. My memory says it burned in 1949 because it was long after Roy French's death in 1947 and I remember where I was the night my mother got the telephone call about the fire. The cause of the fire was never determined. All of the furniture and personal belongings that the family had brought from the Dakotas was destroyed with the exception of the few things Carrie and Lizzie French managed to hastily grab and the few pieces that were stored in the one-and-a-half-story section.

Since James French had died without a will, his estate took years to settle. In 1950, Jay French acquired his siblings' shares of the land except the 100 acres that was Elmer French's share. The farm was broken up and sold. One parcel of 241 acres was sold to the Maryland Department of Corrections in 1957 for its pre-release program. That section was the part on which the original one-and-a-half-story house was still standing. It was the Maryland Department of Corrections that changed the name to Poplar Hill Labor Release Farm. The cedar trees that lined the lane were so diseased they had to be removed. Only about 10 or 11 of the cedar trees still stand at the top of the lane.

William "Bunky" Austin, a former corrections officer at the facility, was at one time in charge of the maintenance of the original section of the house. It was being used as classrooms for the inmates. Mr. Austin went into the basement under the house and found iron rings in the brick walls. He also found remnants of shackles and a loose brick (later lost or stolen) that was dated. Unfortunately, he did not retrieve any of those things, but it leads me to believe that this section was where the tunnel to the creek must have been and where the legend about slaves held there, pre-Civil War, had originated.

Elmer French's 100-acre parcel remained unused until 1969 when he leased it to the University of Maryland Agricultural Extension Department. It has since been sold to the university. Ron Mulford, who has been the director there for over 30 years, told me that the soil in just those 100 acres represents every soil type that is found in the entire State of Maryland, making that land particularly valuable for research.

More recently the plantation house has been moved to Pemberton Historical Park, where it now serves as the curator's residence. Thus, the legacy of a once grand plantation lives on.

A New Home For An Old House: The French House

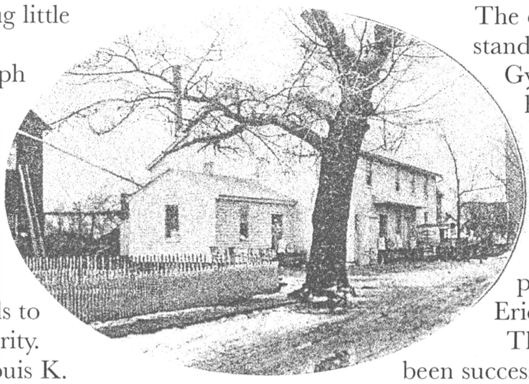
By G. Ray Thompson, Ph.D.

By the mid-1990s, the Maryland Department of Corrections was planning to transform its pre-release facility located in western Wicomico County. On the property was an 18th-century structure that had been in use as an education center. This historic building, long called Hollywood Plantation or the French Farm and, more recently, the Poplar Hill Labor Pre-Release Center, had begun to deteriorate. In March 1998, the Preservation Trust of Wicomico, Inc. mounted a campaign to have the historic structure moved from the Poplar Hill Labor Release Camp to a new location on the property of Pemberton Hall Historical Park. Wicomico County entered into negotiations with the Maryland Department of Corrections, which controlled the Poplar Hill Pre-Release Center, to move the 18th-century home from its original site to a location owned by the county. The house, once moved to its new location, was to become a curator's residence at Pemberton Hall Park.

When the local historical community heard that the state had listed the historic house as surplus, Preservation Trust of Wicomico, Inc. made inquiries to have it moved and preserved. By January 12, 1999, the structure was ready to be moved to its new location. The move required a re-location of the circa-1730 house to a new site approximately six miles away from its original location. Examination of the structure showed that the wooden beams of the house were more than 250 years old, adding to the historic importance of the structure. Few wooden houses of that era exist intact today because of the susceptibility of wood to rot. The original plan was to move the house in December 1998, but once the moving crew began its work, it was discovered that a front beam, previously obscured by a porch, had rotted and had to be replaced prior to moving the building. The 10" by 12" beam that ran the length of the building had to be removed and replaced by a new beam. Internationally recognized house mover Gerry Matyko and Expert House Movers moved the house to its new site. The Maryland Corrections Agency, Wicomico County, Preservation Trust of Wicomico, and the Maryland Historic Trust all provided financial assistance to make the move possible.

Today, the house sits on a six-acre field with a pond behind it, mimicking its original location near the Wicomico River. *The Daily Times* heralded the move in the following way: "Rare is the opportunity for one house, a few trucks and about $160,000.00 to satisfy the needs of a historical park for a curator's residence, the needs of a correctional facility for classroom space and the desire for a local historical group to save a colonial landmark in one grand gesture."

A Maryland Roller Mill



The picture gives us a view of a snug little milling property at Cambridge, Maryland, made from a photograph taken on a bright warm day of winter or early spring, when the snow is melting rapidly and slush cover the ground. Cambridge, on the Choptank River, which here is two miles wide, being located in the famous "east shore" country of Maryland, doubtless does not have many days when there is snow, which adds to the gaiety of the population by its very rarity.

The mill of the picture belongs to Louis K. Warren. It has two stories and a basement, and covers an area of 35x50 feet, not to mention the wing. In the extreme left of the picture may be seen a corner of the grain elevator, 24x64 ½ feet in size, holding 20,000 bushels of wheat and 5,000 of corn; while at the extreme right may be seen a section of the city waterworks' standpipe, for Cambridge is a town of about 8,000 people and has "all modern improvements." In the same lot on which the elevator stands is the dwelling house of Mr. Warren.

The equipment of the mill includes four double stands of 7x18-inch rolls, two No. 5 Wolf Gyrators, two runs of corn stones, one hominy mill and a cob crusher. The mill, which was built in 1892, was reflowed about a year ago and is now making 100 barrels of flour daily and the miller believes it is the equal of any 200 barrel mill in clean-up or percentage of patent produced. The power is a 70-horsepower Erie City Automatic Engine.

The mill is now in its 15th year and has been successful through its entire history, so that its leading brands, "Sunbeam" (patent), "Whiteloaf" (clear) and "Reliable" (low grade) are well known in all the east coast counties. Louis Earl Warren, a very promising young miller, is in mechanical charge of the property, the business end being managed by the owner.

Note: This article appeared in the magazine *American Miller* in January 1907.

A Glossary of Federal and Victorian Vernacular Architecture in Historic Whitehaven

by Jefferson Boyer

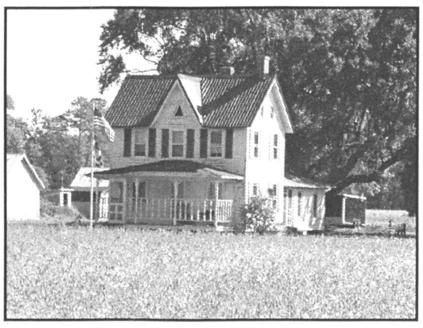
Historically, there were two distinct and separate towns called Whitehaven on the Wicomico River. The earliest, Whitehaven Town, began in the early 1700s and was located across the river from present-day Whitehaven. After lots were laid out in 1708, only two or three homes were built. The venture became a ghost town; records show no activity on Whitehaven Town lots after 1760. Whitehaven Town never appeared on maps of the region prior to 1800, and at least two historians refer to it as a Colonial-era ghost town.

Present-day Whitehaven is a 19th century village situated at a river-ferry landing. The ferry itself has crossed the river at this site since 1685. The town was developed around 1809, when the Post Office opened. 1809 records also show a property located at the site of the ferry landing. Two nearby structures date from the 18th century but, in the village proper, no building predates the 1809 founding date of the town. The majority of the homes date to between 1885 and 1920, sometimes referred to as the "golden age" of the Chesapeake.

Economically, Whitehaven was a mercantile center. At any given time during its heyday it included at least two general stores and a hardware store, and once boasted two women's hat shops. Sited farther upriver than Mt. Vernon, in Somerset County, it never had a large oyster or crab industry; watermen from outlying points and islands came to Whitehaven to shop. Regular steamboat service to and from Salisbury and Baltimore kept the village thriving.

Today, Whitehaven embodies the notion of a quiet, Eastern Shore riverfront village with its tiny streets and historic buildings mere yards from the riverbank. The entire town is listed as a National Register Historic District, deservedly recognized for its historic and architectural significance. Although most of the structures are humble, they bear a wealth of architectural detail that reveals a great deal about Whitehaven's past. Too often we overlook the commonplace features of buildings such as these but, truth be told, most Delmarvans a century ago didn't live in architectural showpieces; they lived in modest homes that are properly termed "Victorian vernacular." Although a community of only 20 or so 19th-century homes, Whitehaven provides a mini-lesson in identifying many features common to homes on the Eastern Shore.

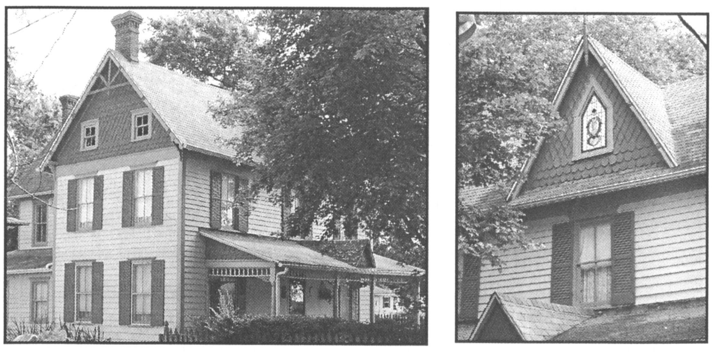
The "Prototype" Eastern Shore Home



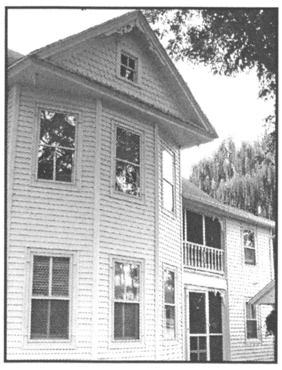
Just outside Whitehaven, the Larmore family homestead (c. 1890) is an easy-to-spot example of a typical rural, Eastern Shore Victorian home. Characteristic features include:

- A central dormer gable, centered on the front door
- A wide front porch with turned posts and decorative brackets
- Patterned shingles (of cedar or cypress wood) in the gable ends
- A center stair flanked by two front parlors
- A two-story back wing, that creates either a "T"- or an "L"-shaped floor plan
- Sleeping porches
- Side porches off the kitchen that function as a "mud room" but are not enclosed
- Steeply pitched attic stairs

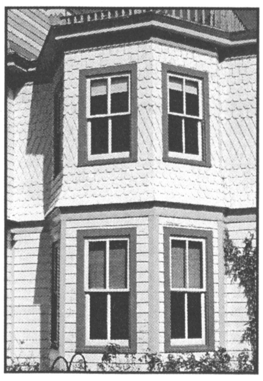
Victorian homes provide a riot of architectural detail, as seen in the following photographs:



The exterior of the John Messick house (c. 1893) is a well-preserved example of Victorian vernacular detail, with patterned shingles, front porch and central dormer gable.

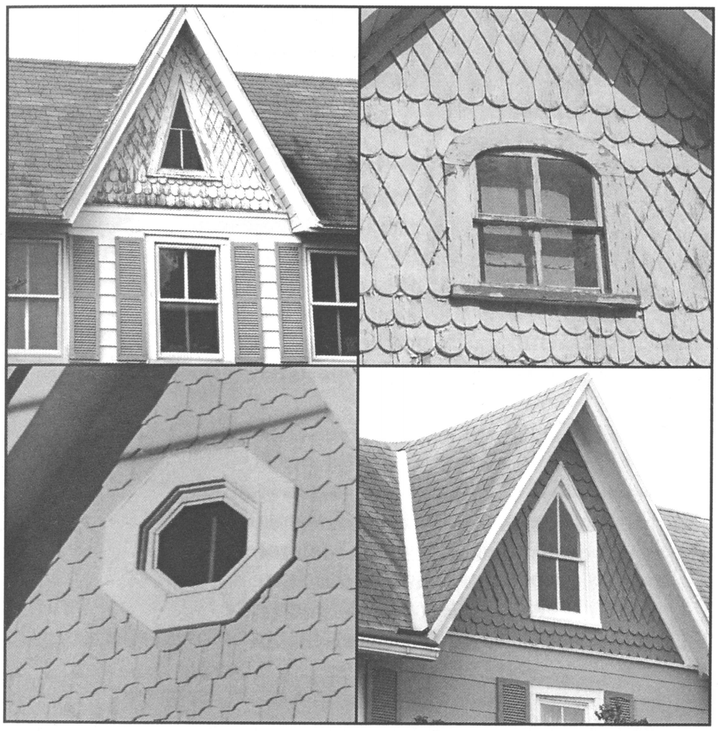


The John Wingate House (c. 1890) still retains its railed sleeping porch at the back of the house. Of necessity, before electric fans and air conditioning, sleeping porches provided a cool place to sleep on hot summer nights. In the 20th century, sleeping porches were often sacrificed and enclosed to make bathrooms. To the left of the porch is a prime example of a bow window.



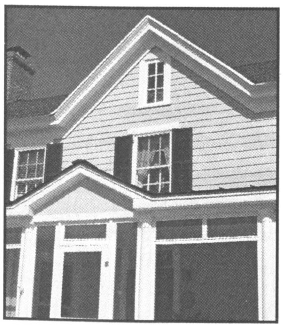
When compared to the deeper, more angular bay window (this example is from the Whitehaven Hotel), the difference between a bay window and a bow window is easy to spot.

Like snowflakes, it seems that no two houses in Whitehaven have identical gables, as these photos reveal. Like many Victorian farmhouses on the Eastern Shore, gables in Whitehaven are frequently shingled.

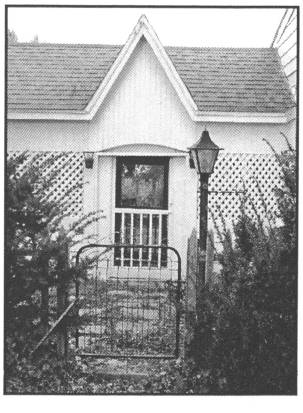


These gable windows provide an optical illusion of large attic spaces.

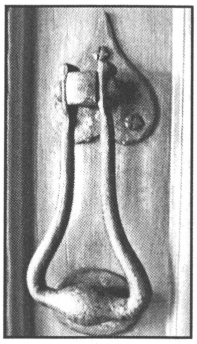
These houses seem to borrow from Dutch townhouse facades of the 1500s, which appear larger than they really are. Large windows on the first and second stories suggest greater height between floors, and the gable windows are almost on a dollhouse scale. Inside, the ceilings are low and the windows close to the floor. Similar homes can be found on Deal and Hooper's islands.



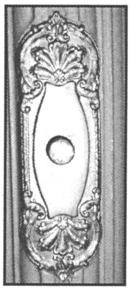
Rain gables, mini-gables above a porch door, are common in the region. The reason for them, however, isn't decorative—it's practical. Rain gutters weren't typically used on Eastern Shore homes. This rain gable on the Brannous Palmore House (c. 1850) kept the roof runoff from pouring on one's head when entering or exiting the house in the rain.



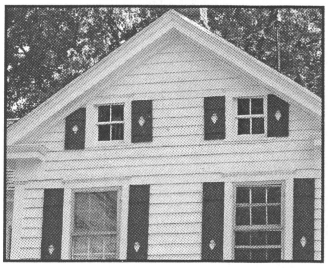
A latticed breezeway connects the back of the Marcellus Jones House (c. 1815) to its summer kitchen. Note that it also has a rain gable above the screen door.



This iron doorknocker on the Daniel J. Elliott House (c. 1892) dates to the Arts and Crafts movement.

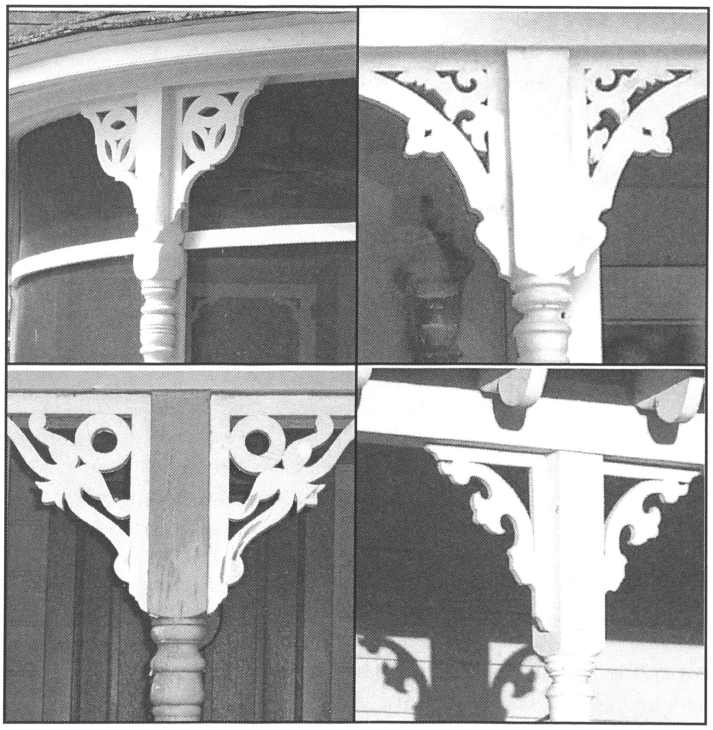


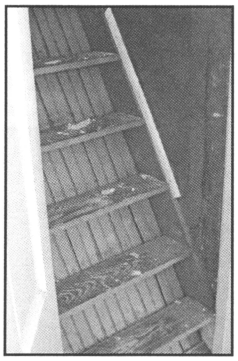
Similar to the old doorbells, which had to be hand-cranked, this example on the McClain Evans House mounts on the center of the front door and has a manual push-button style crank device with which to ring the bell.



Window shutters typically were louvered. However, these solid panel shutters with diamond cut outs were made during the Depression by a local man in need of extra money. They may be found from Quantico to Whitehaven and on to Nanticoke.

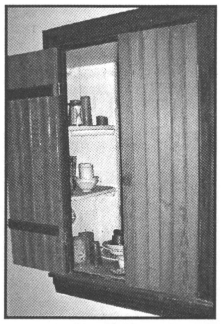
Brackets: A Sampler
Just like gable windows, no two houses in Whitehaven have the same porch brackets.



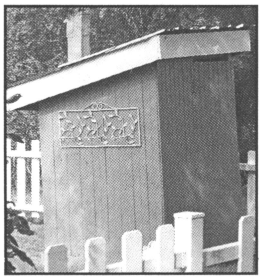


Some Whitehaven homes include modest, yet notable, architectural features of an Eastern Shore vernacular house.

Many homes in Whitehaven have steeply-pitched ladder-like stairs leading to the attic. As a river town close to the Chesapeake Bay, Whitehaven's historic maritime connections make clear the lineage from the attic stairs to those found on schooners and sailboats. These same peculiarly pitched stairs can also be found in homes in Sharptown and Bivalve, nearby boatbuilding centers on the Nanticoke River.

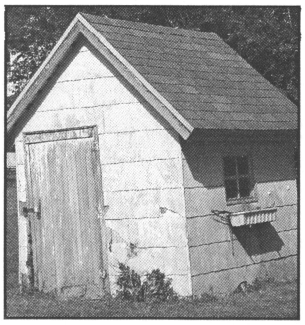


A "pass through" cupboard is located beside the chimney between the dining room and kitchen, in the Daniel J. Elliott House (c. 1892). The former residents of the house called it a "dumb waiter."

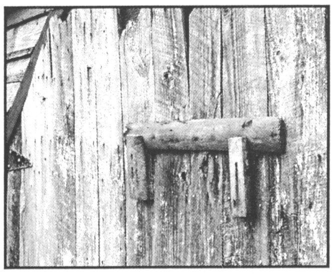


Typical Vernacular Outbuildings

The last of the outhouses in Whitehaven still stands behind the Adolphus White House (c. 1900), on Church Street. An unusual feature is the siding. Instead of clapboards, the outer walls are made of pine bead-board.

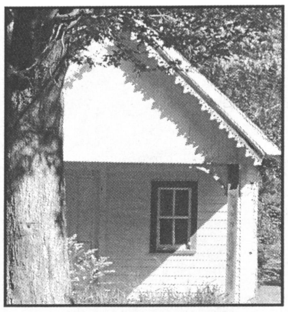


What looks like a potting shed is actually a fancy version of a pump house, which houses a water well pump. Early pumps were noisy piston-driven machines, later replaced by still-noisy electric pumps; both made housing the pump in a separate building an attractive option. During the mild Eastern Shore winters, a single light bulb suspended on a cord is all that is needed to prevent the works from freezing up.

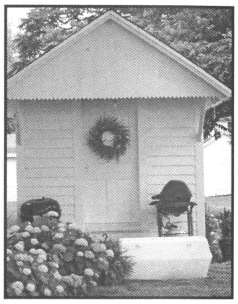


Another subtle link to shipbuilding traditions can be seen in these wooden barn doors, which are very lightweight. Close inspection reveals that the door boards are quite thin-cut, to the thickness of shiplap. Notice the rustic, wooden bolt on this door— clearly, security was not an issue!

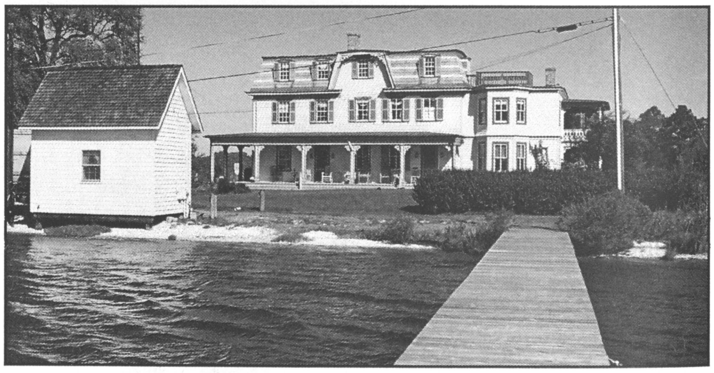
These two Victorian era outbuildings (upper right) are variations of a washhouse. Easy to distinguish, their porch roofs are actually an extension of the main gable. In each case, the gable detail is made of vertical pine bead-board.



Although the farmhouse for which it was built has long-since vanished, this shed, with its delicately milled gingerbread border, still stands across the road from the Red Roost Restaurant on Clara Road. Temporarily braced by a pressure-treated post, the original posts and bracket work are intact.

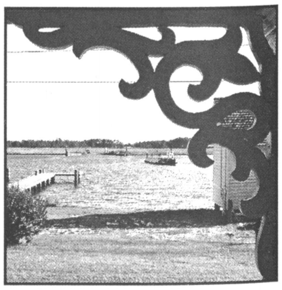


Just visible behind a house on River Street, this outbuilding houses a well pump for the main house. It once was a simpler version of a wash house, with no-nonsense brackets supporting the gable overhang. The sole architectural flourish is found in the simple saw-toothed trim on the bottom edge of the gable.

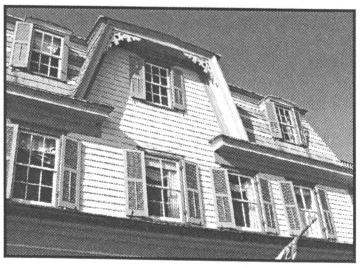


The Whitehaven Hotel: A Mix of Federal Simplicity and Victorian Flourishes

The riverfront Whitehaven Hotel's exterior dates to the 1880s, when a c. 1810 house and a mid-19th century general store were joined under a single mansard roof and the building was converted to a businessman's hotel to accommodate traveling salesmen during the steamboat era.



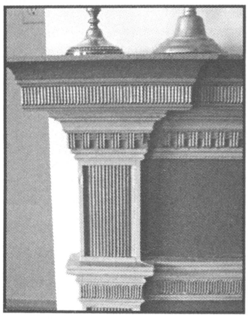
Framed by an oversized porch bracket, the historic Whitehaven Ferry plies its way across the Wicomico River.



Mansard roofs are comparatively rare in Wicomico County. The Whitehaven Hotel is one of a handful of buildings in the county that feature this Second Empire roof design of the 1870-1890 period.

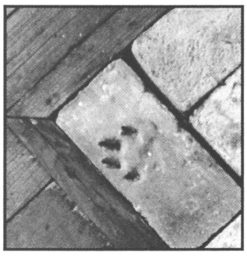
Simulated slate made of cedar and cypress shake is painted gray to mimic more expensive slate shingles on the hotel's roof. This same "fakery" can be found in the heart of Salisbury's historic Newtown neighborhood, on the mansard roof of the Perry-Cooper House on William Street, built in the same period.

Interior Features of the Hotel, Federal Era, c. 1810

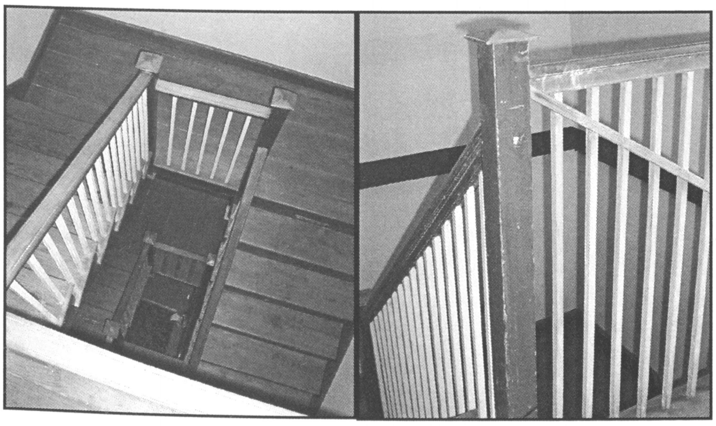


Intricately carved, the delicate Federal Era reed work details of the parlor fireplace date to 1810, when the center section of the hotel was built as a private residence. Mantelpieces of this quality were most likely ordered from craftsmen in Baltimore. During restoration, it was discovered that it was originally painted slate gray (typical of Federal mantels); it was returned to its historic color scheme.

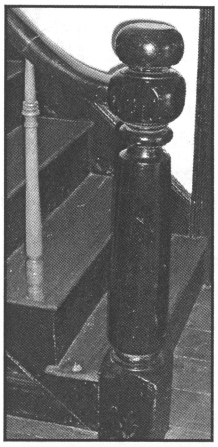
James Madison was president when a local dog trotted across an unfired brick and left its paw-print on this hearth brick in the Federal parlor.



Unadorned square posts and square spindles, or balusters, give a picket-fence-lightness to a landing of the hotel's c. 1810 main stairwell, open all the way to the third floor. At the top of the stairs, original paint was discovered once again—the railings were painted red and the spindles dove-gray.

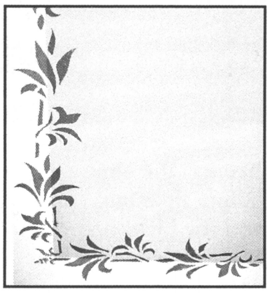


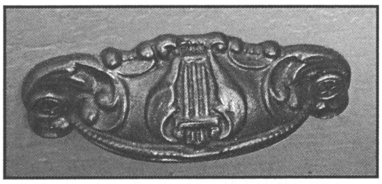
Interior Features of the Hotel, Victorian Era, c. 1890



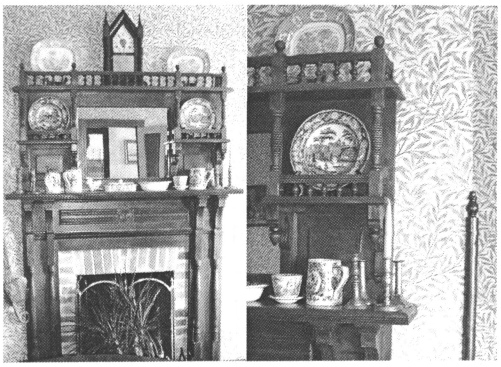
A Victorian Era remodeling left the lower flight of the main stairwell of the hotel—part of the 1810 building—with an "updated," thickly-turned newel post and oak spindles. It dates to the late 1800s, when the building was converted to a hotel. The architectural transformation (or the renovator's budget), however, did not extend past the first stair landing.

Stencil work is rare on the lower Delmarva Peninsula, but somehow this example survived in the former lobby of the hotel. During renovation, hints of stenciling were discovered on the badly deteriorated plaster ceiling. Careful scraping with wooden spatulas uncovered several feet of the stencil pattern, which was carefully traced. When drywall ceilings were installed, the stenciling and the original colors—cream, jade green and scarlet red—were reapplied. The faux wood graining of the bead-board walls in the same room was recreated as well.





Lyre pattern drawer pulls, found on built-in cabinets in the hotel's former lobby area, suggest construction in or around the Civil War Era.

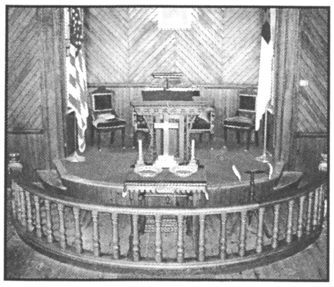


The dining room includes a fine example of the over-mantel, a quintessentially Victorian "improvement" over the earlier, simple mantel shelf. Over-mantels typically included a mirror, bracket-work and tiers of gallery shelving to hold bric-a-brac. To the right is a wooden corner guard, original to the room.

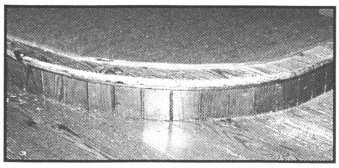
Evidence of Ship Carpentry in the Village Church

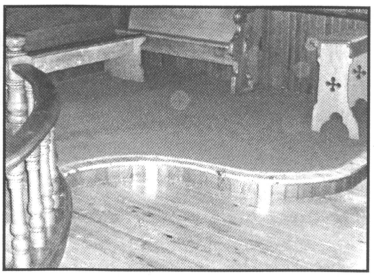
Local tradition holds that ship carpenters from the local marine railway built the Whitehaven United Methodist Church in 1892. Although documentation of this has not been found, many features of the interior seem to corroborate local lore.

The walls and ceiling of the church are of pine bead-board, with the original varnish still shining after nearly 120 years. While pine bead-board was commonly used for wainscoting in homes, it was also used to finish off the interior cabins of boats. The use of varnish instead of paint suggests that ship carpenters may have been employed in building the church.

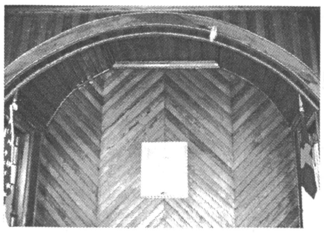


The flat, wide curve of the altar railing and stout oak balusters are unusual for a Methodist church but are a common feature on ships, particularly on the deck and fife railing areas.





Around the altar and the pulpit, lines curve gracefully and the bead-board appears to have been fitted effortlessly. Many have noted how similar it is to the craftsmanship below deck in large sailing vessels of the period.



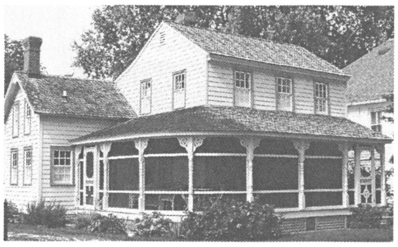
The herringbone pattern of the bead board, while decorative, cross-braces the underlying supports, effectively doubling the strength of the structure and enabling it to better withstand hurricane winds (the coastal lifesaving station at Assateague has the same pattern on its board interior).

The church once stood one-quarter mile away from its present location, sited on the road out of town. In the early 1900s the church was moved to the village center. During the move a village stable caught fire just as the mule team, hauling the church, passed by. Villagers worked simultaneously to man the bucket brigade and direct the moving of the building. The church survived unharmed.

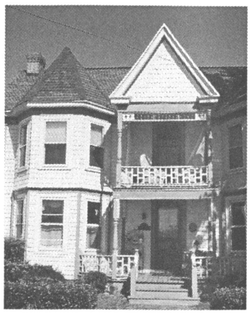
In 1954, Hurricane Hazel's winds knocked down the steeple; it was replaced with a shorter version, which stood for a half century. In 2006, the Whitehaven Heritage Association secured state grants and raised additional funds to rebuild the steeple to its original height.

Just across the river, near Mt. Vernon, is the architectural twin of the Whitehaven church, St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church. Its sanctuary, front porch and steeple placement are identical, the only differences are that St. Paul's has Gothic arched windows and a somewhat different belfry roof and tower design.

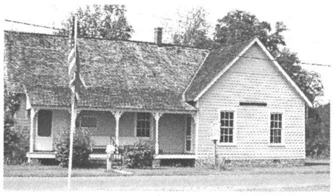
Miscellaneous Architectural Features of Whitehaven



Federal Era Vernacular: Ella W. Dashiell house (c. 1810). Behind the Victorian era porch is a rare example of a vernacular cottage from the Federal Era, and one of the oldest houses in the village of Whitehaven.

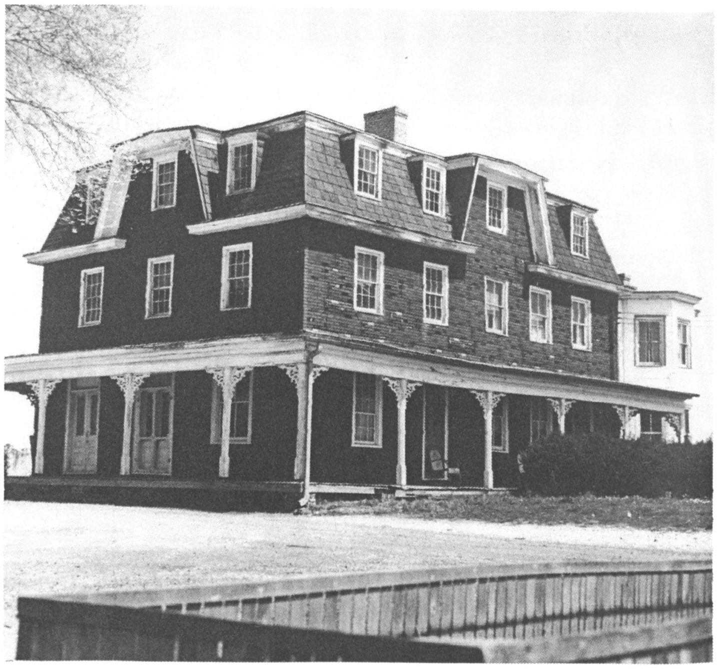


Distinctive for its two turreted bay windows and its diminutive balcony porch, the Larner McLain House (c. 1890) is an often-photographed Whitehaven home.



The Whitehaven Schoolhouse (c. 1886) has remained virtually unchanged on the outside since the early 1900s, when the building was enlarged into a two-room school. Wicomico County schoolhouses in the Victorian Era were all similar in style to the Whitehaven Schoolhouse. The building was restored in 1996 and is maintained by the Whitehaven Heritage Association.

Jefferson Boyer is a Nabb Research Center volunteer, past president of the Whitehaven Heritage Association and instructor at Wor-Wic Community College and Salisbury University.



Whitehaven Hotel before restoration.

Seaford's Gubernatorial Mansion: The Ross "Cottage"

by Earl B. Tull

In October 1860, former Delaware Governor William Henry Harrison Ross sent letters to friends inviting them to come visit him at his "newly completed cottage." This had been a real labor of love completed after his one and only term as Delaware's governor, the youngest person ever elected to that office, even to the present.

William H.H. Ross was born in Laurel, Delaware, on June 2, 1814, the fourth child of Caleb and Letitia Lofland Ross. Caleb (1784-1841) was a prosperous, hard-working businessman, with interests in logging, milling and mercantile establishments in the Sussex County area and beyond. The governor's older sister, Sarah Ann, married the son of Samuel R. Payntor II, who served as the governor of Delaware from 1824-1827.

Little is known regarding Caleb's father, William (1750-1796), other than the fact the Ross clan emigrated from Scotland to America during the mid-18th century. By the early 19th century the family had become prosperous and William, grandson of the immigrant of the same name, attended school in Laurel, Delaware, until 1832. Records indicate he was enrolled at Claremont Academy in Pennsylvania from 1832 to 1834. His education was considerably broadened when he and his father made a grand tour of Europe in 1836. A typical part of a wealthy young man's education, this exposure to many types of architecture may have played an important role in his decision to build a home in the Italianate style, a little later in life. William became an integral part of his father's rapidly expanding businesses, even participating in activities in Adams County, Illinois, for a while. However, he was definitely rooted in Sussex County and at one time wrote to a friend: "I prefer to live in Old Sussex."

The story of Ross Plantation begins at the time John Tennant emigrated from Scotland around the year 1770 and began acquiring land around what would later become Seaford, Delaware. History does not tell how John acquired his wealth, but, at his death, he owned 1,797 acres of land. The Tennant family, along with the Hoopers, is credited with being the founders of Seaford. Marriages between the two families brought even closer ties.

The elder John Tennant died in 1806 leaving his vast holdings to his daughter, Ann, and his son, John II, who would come to be known as Colonel John. His will bequeathed to his son the "... dwelling plantation where I now live with all the lands which I hold or possess adjoining thereto lying on both sides of Horse Pen Branch." In 1810, Colonel John married his first cousin, Sarah Hooper, but died without a will in 1831, leaving Sarah and their 10 children in difficult circumstances.

Sarah continued to live on the plantation for several years while the estate was handled in the Orphan's Court. Finally, she and her son James were able to sell 1,660 acres of land to Caleb Ross for the sum of $14,180. Caleb himself never lived there, but upon his death in 1841 the property was willed to his son, William. The soon-to-be governor of Delaware moved his wife and three children from Laurel to Seaford in 1845.

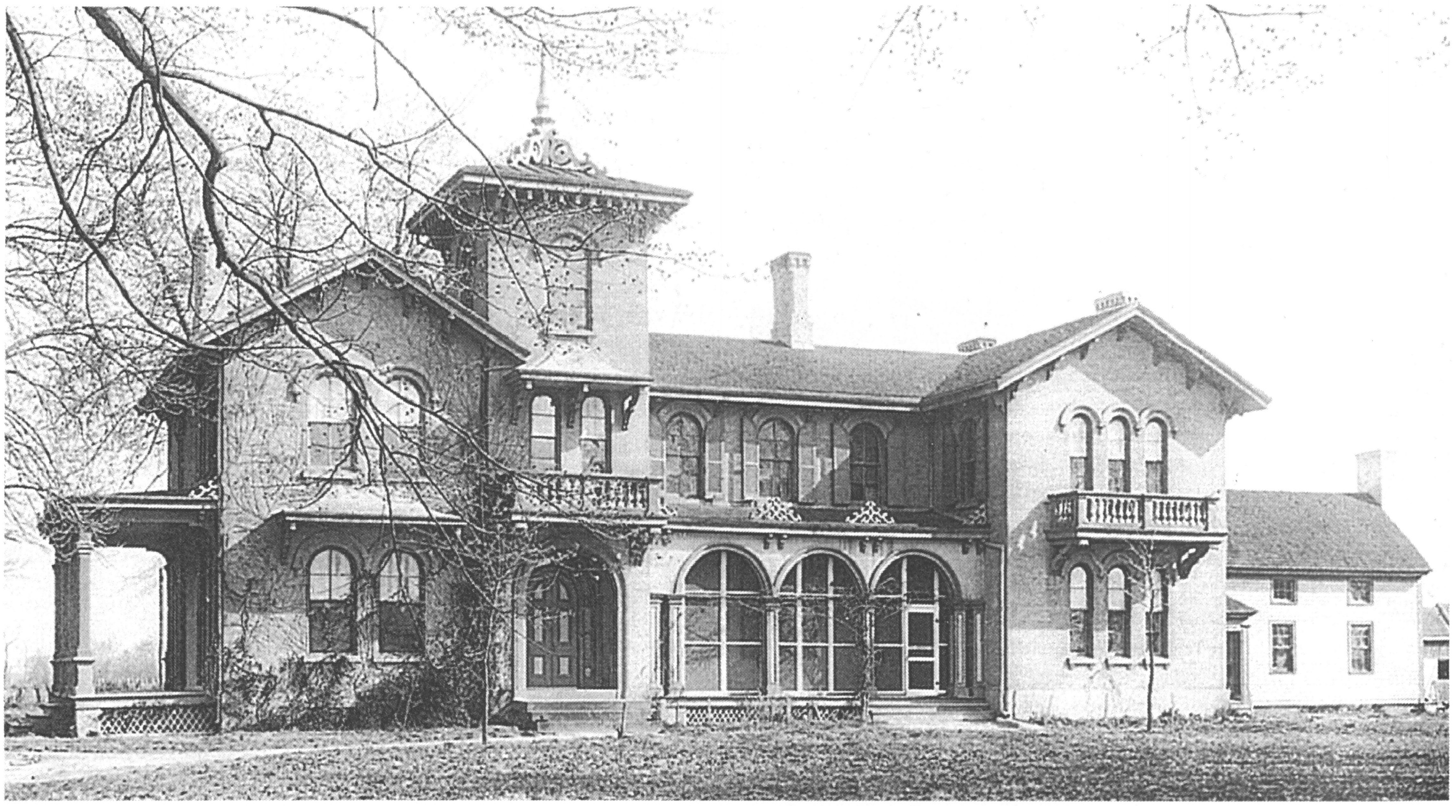
Little is known about the size and type of house that would have been home to Ross and his family while he was governor from 1851 to 1855. We can assume that it was the house acquired from the Tennants. By the end of his term, social pressure and a rapidly growing family spurred his interest in expanding and remodeling the house into a stuccoed mansion of almost 7,000 square feet. Ross had a reputation for implementing sound farming practices and may have preferred building and farm supervision to life in the public eye. To Henry Adams on August 28, 1856, he wrote: "I am so deaf that I do not like to go anywhere much." Yet he remained active in the public sphere and was heavily involved in promoting and supporting the extension of the railroad from Dover to the Nanticoke River.

Who was the architect of Ross Mansion? This question is often asked. There is no record of an architect or of building plans. An excerpt from a letter to the president of the Delaware Railroad indicates that the ex-governor was both an architect and a construction supervisor. On September 6, 1856, he wrote: "I hope you will excuse my absence from the last meeting of the board when I inform you that I am in the midst of my fodder saving and besides have a gang of carpenters, a brick layer, and painter to look after and provide materials for their work ... ." He was, no doubt, referring to the construction of his new home.

Another question often asked is: "Why did the governor choose the Italianate style?" We have no definitive answer, but there are several possible answers to choose from. The governor's Grand Tour of Europe in his early 20s likely influenced his choice. Also, in 1850 one of the premier architects of the time, Andrew Jackson Downing, published The Architecture of Country Houses, which features a house of the same design as the "honeymoon cottage" built on the property at the end of the drive. This cottage was the home of the governor's third son, James Jefferson Ross, who lived there until a house across the road was completed. The Italianate style had found great popularity in America, with many homes on the lower shore adopting a flat-roofed, stocky tower-like appearance. No matter what the inspiration or source, we know that the final product was and remains impressive even after 150 years. A quick tour of the house leaves a visitor with a deeper appreciation of the scope of the 19th-century project.

In July 1976, the Ross Mansion was acquired by the Seaford Historical Society and renovated to its Victorian splendor, including the return of many original Ross family furnishings to its rooms.

As one enters the driveway the first eye-catching feature is the three-story tower. This is the dominant feature of the Italianate style. Besides being so imposing, the tower served as 19th century air conditioning. Open windows in the tower and windows and doors on the first floor created a natural flow of air and cooled off the house during the hot, sultry Sussex County summers. Contrary to popular thought, the tower did not provide a place for the governor to look out and supervise the work on the plantation, as the roofline blocks the view on three sides. Other Italianate features of the tower include arched



windows, balconies, bracketed eave supports, shutters and double-arched entry doors.

After passing through the front doors, one enters a 10 by 25 foot hall dominated by the original curved stairway. There is a mortgage button in the newel post indicating that the house was mortgage-free. The Scottish heritage of the Ross family is evidenced by the coat of arms and the Ross plaids on display.

To the left of the doorway is the formal parlor, with ceiling moldings depicting agricultural products (such as fruit and grain) grown on the farm. A bay window in the back provides a setting for the floor-to-ceiling tree during the present-day Victorian Christmas celebration held every year. The Italian marble fireplace surround, rosewood grand piano (c. 1873) and floor-to-ceiling windows opening onto the covered porch provided a most elegant spot for entertaining for the Rosses. To the right of the entry hall is the family parlor, or sitting room, containing portraits of the governor and his wife, Elizabeth Emeline (Hall), whom he married in 1840. They produced 10 children, six boys and four girls. Their oldest son, Caleb, enlisted in the Confederate Army but died of typhoid fever before seeing action in the war.

Upstairs are four large bedrooms, two dressing rooms, a nursery and a room that was obviously a bathing area. Above the latter was a copper-lined tank for holding water pumped in by windmill. Each room has its own unique features, but the most spectacular is the bedchamber of Governor and Mrs. Ross, with an original fireplace that, at a later date, was converted to burn coal. The bed and dresser, although not original Ross pieces, are signed "Badger/Boston 1855." The room also includes a collection of hair jewelry, often worn by those mourning the death of a family member, which belonged to the Ross family.

The only portion of the home known to date to the 1700s is a two-story, 16 by 22 foot wood structure at the extreme rear of the building. Its nine over six windows and original fireplace, along with a built-in strong box, has led it to be called the "Governor's Office," although its original purpose remains uncertain. The property also includes the only documented original slave quarters in Delaware, an original 1850s granary and a stable, as well as corn cribs moved from other farms.

The Ross Plantation is open Saturday and Sunday from 1-4 p.m., and special tours may be arranged. This year marks the 150th anniversary of the Ross Mansion. Celebrations throughout the year are planned. Please join us to help commemorate this occasion.

For more information on the Ross Mansion and Plantation, please visit the Web site of the Seaford Historical Society at: www.seafordhistoricalsociety.com.

Earl Tull, a resident of Seaford, Delaware, is a member and past president of the Seaford Historical Society.

Two and One Half Miles in 300 Years:
A Personal View of a Family and its Eastern Shore Homes

By Bert Thornton

Original wood paneling, Desart.

Many people talk about the footprint left by their family on history. I am afraid that I will have to be satisfied with a thumbprint. All branches of my mother's family—the Schoolfields, Barnes, Slocombs, Hendersons, Aydelottes, Corbins and Thorntons—resided in the Pitts Creek area within a few miles of the Maryland-Virginia line on the Eastern Shore, from the 1600s to the 1940s.

My father was Chester Thornton, son of Fred and Josephine Lore Thornton. The Thorntons, Lores and Sterlings were all from Crisfield, Maryland. I was born in 1924 at 809 Second Street, Pocomoke City, Maryland. My mother, Susan Brittan Slocomb Thornton Trudel, and I lived with my grandmother, Mollie Irene Slocomb, until 1943 when I joined the Navy. Just two and one-half miles away from my home was "Desart" (Desert) on Hillman Road, the land grant of 200 acres purchased by Margaret Schoolfield in 1687 for 100 "pieces of eight." We wondered how anything on the Eastern Shore could be called Desart until we learned that it also meant desolate. Desart grew to several hundred acres on both sides of Hillman Road, in the Pitts Creek area, and was resurveyed as Schoolfield's Pleasure. Desart, Schoolfield's Pleasure and a tract called Pittsburgh stayed in our family's hands until the 1920s when grandmother's brother, Augustus Schoolfield, moved into town with her.

Many of the household items from Desart were brought to Pocomoke, where I grew up treasuring these relics of the past. We have the spinning wheel that my great-grandmother, Mary Barnes Schoolfield, remembered having seen her grandmother using. There are also several engraved coin silver tablespoons and teaspoons. One teaspoon had to be rescued from the pigpen at Desart after it was thrown out with the slop water. We also have a brass candlestick, a tin candle mold and the little brass lamp that grandmother Mollie took with her to bed. The last thing loaded on the wagon when we moved was a box with great-grandmother's china. Sadly, the horse started too soon and the box fell off. A pitcher survived and I have it yet.

I visited Desart many times and realized I was viewing history. I remember clearly the cornice with its dentil molding, the beautiful paneling in the great room and the corner fireplace in the dining room. The Schoolfield cemetery stood behind the house. Grandmother remembered the cemetery for the slave quarters standing beside it. The house was used by migrant workers who always invited me to look around.

The paneling from Desart is now in the home of Wilson Davis in Tony Tank, in Salisbury, Maryland. In addition to the drawings in H. Chandlee Forman's book, *Old Buildings, Gardens, And Furniture in Tidewater Maryland*, we have pictures of the room just before the paneling was rescued by Robert Withey Decorating, of Salisbury, and installed by Elton Hughes in his new home (now owned by Wilson Davis). Words cannot express my emotions a few years ago when Wilson Davis gave me several feet of crown molding and a piece of molding from the stair facing that was not used in the reconstruction. It hangs in my family room and displays the "Prahl" sword blade that was used by my ancestors in both the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812.

My grandmother's early education was with the Dennis children at Beverly on the Pocomoke River. She walked across the field to the home of her neighbor, Rose Carsley, where the Dennis carriage would pick them up. As she walked, she would sing, "Wose, I'm a-cummin'." If she arrived too late for the carriage, Rose's father would take her on horseback to Beverly where she would take classes with the Dennis children. I mentioned this to John Dennis of Princess Anne. He knew about the family tutor but did not know that children from neighboring farms were included in the classes.

My grandfather, Cuthbert Sewell Slocomb, was born May 12, 1852, on Slocomb Farm Road, in the Horntown area near New Church in Accomack County, Virginia. The Slocombs did not fare well during the Civil War. The slaves ran away when the Emancipation Proclamation was published and the house burned soon after. Eyebrows were raised when Cuthbert's oldest sister, Ida Ann, married Captain William Bloodgood, on February 3, 1864. He was a Yankee with the occupying forces!

After the war, as in many Southern families, the oldest son, Frank, went north to get a job. The post-war depression was really hard. The Slocombs moved to a farm that Captain Bloodgood had purchased near Corbin Hall, Horntown, Virginia. People around Horntown tried to help each other as much as they could. Cuthbert and his brothers chopped wood for 50 cents a cord, but could only do two cords a day. Cuthbert's sister couldn't go to school because she had no shoes. The boys could only go to school in winter because they were needed on the farm to do the day-to-day work.

Great-grandmother Susan asked Frank to send a barrel of flour and a barrel of pork. She also asked for five pounds of red pepper. "It makes the hens lay better and protects them from croup,"

Original paneled fireplace surround, Desart.

Paneling rescued from Desart, in home of Wilson Davis, Tony Tank, Wicomico County.

she used to say. Talk about an explosive henhouse! You could do business with the tavern, but they wanted only young chickens. In 1869, Captain Bloodgood organized a cooperative effort to send a boatload of oysters to Perth Amboy, New Jersey. There was no market for them, so the oysters were dumped into the harbor and Bloodgood returned empty handed. I have several letters written to Frank by his mother and they are heart-breaking.

In 1880, Grandfather Cuthbert joined a cousin in Cameron, Texas, and became a photographer. We have many of his pictures and his logbook that tells how to make the solutions for printing the pictures and making the glass plates. I thought of following his directions for processing my own glass slides until I read, "Take a $10 gold piece and dissolve in acid."

Cuthbert was very successful in Texas and from his pictures it would appear that he was happy. All this changed when Cuthbert learned that his brother Frank was very ill. He said good-bye to his happy times in Texas and moved to the Slocomb house in Onancock.

Frank Aydelotte Slocomb had moved to Onancock in 1880. He opened Slocomb Brothers' General Merchandise and built a new house that is now the rectory of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. Frank loved Onancock. He became superintendent of the Market Street Methodist Church, built in 1882, with a memorial window in his name. He was also an active member of the Masonic Lodge. At the time of his death in 1892, he was a member of the town council. The mayor and council declared 30 days of mourning to recognize his passing.

Cuthbert missed Texas, but he and his brothers were busy at the store and in starting families. My Aunt Tannie (Susan Brittann Slocomb) married Leonidas Doughty, a blacksmith, on December 23, 1885. They built Wayside in downtown Onancock and purchased several farms, including Grapeland. Their son, Dr. James Corbin Doughty, studied with a Dr. Joselyn in Canada and specialized in the treatment of diabetes.

James Wallace Slocomb, brother of Frank, married Mary Adelaide Belote in 1894, and Cuthbert married Mollie Irene Schoolfield December 25, 1895, and both families moved into the Slocomb home. It must have been getting crowded. I asked grandmother how so many families could live in one house. She said: "Whenever you felt tension, you went for a walk, and sometimes we did a lot of walking."

Around 1903, it was decided to close the Slocomb Brothers store. Cuthbert, a carpenter and bricklayer, moved to Pocomoke City, Maryland, with his family and helped rebuild the Methodist Episcopal Church and the new passenger train station there. In 1906, he heard that bricklayers in Norfolk, Virginia, were earning $5 a day working on the Jamestown Bicentennial Exposition. He wanted to get some of that "big" money, so the family moved to a house on Bank Street in Norfolk. These were exciting times and they entertained everyone who wanted to come down for a visit.

After the exposition, the Slocombs returned to Pocomoke where Cuthbert died in 1916, leaving grandmother with three young daughters. There was no time for grieving. She opened a boardinghouse catering to the men installing telephone lines. Whenever there were more men than rooms, she would farm them out to the neighbors, but she would still serve all the meals. Doolie and Sadie, children of slaves that grandmother had grown up with, would walk to Pocomoke to help the family with its chores.

I got to know and respect a man, whose name escapes me, who had been a slave. He was purchased as a "babe in arms" for 25 cents. He was raised with my Uncle Charlie and they were lifelong friends. Growing up, Charlie would tease, "You ain't worth a quarter!" This ex-slave was a very old man when I remember riding my bicycle to his house. He would be reclining on his daybed and I would listen for hours as he would tell me about slavery and the post-Civil War years. The Schoolfields had freed their slaves long before the Civil War. Many of them stayed right in the area.

My mother would travel from Pocomoke City to Onancock on the steamer for summer vacations. Uncle Leonidas Doughty would meet her at the steamboat wharf in the carriage. I loved visiting Wayside. It was like a hands-on museum. Uncle Leon liked fishing and hunting and had enough guns for a small army. When cleaning out the workshops behind the house, his son James found a barrel of gunpowder! Their bedroom contained two (his and her) full-size, four-poster, canopy beds. Their son, Dr. James Doughty, preserved the home as his parents had maintained it.

Grapeland, on the Eastern Shore's Occohannock Creek, has many wonderful memories for me. The Doughtys moved the home's outside kitchen to a grassy knoll and used it as a vacation cottage. There were many family gatherings there. I learned to drive the car on the lawns of Grapeland. I had to be careful not to hit a tree or a sheep or drive into the creek. After Emma and I were married, Grapeland became our summer retreat. Our boys remember us talking about Indians and they wondered if they would come up from the creek at night and massacre us!

James Doughty, who lived at Grapeland, was terrified at the thought of fire. A great-aunt had died of burns after her petticoat caught fire while she was butchering. We loved the evenings by lamplight and candlelight. Grapeland had a flowing artesian well with a hydraulic ram. The weight of the falling water filled the tower that distributed water to the manor house and the cottage. We knew that as long as we could hear the "chug-chug-chug" of the ram, we would have running water. We had a homecoming of sorts when Emma and I made mint juleps at Grapeland for the Nabb Research Center's fundraiser in 2008.

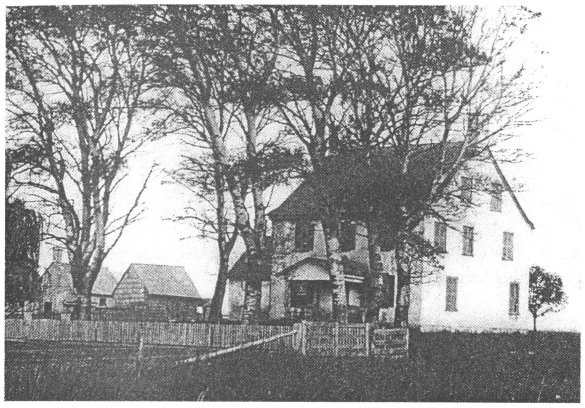
After reading all of this about my family on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia, you may think it strange that I am now living in a 250 year-old farm house in the Burkittsville area of Frederick County in Western Maryland, far to the west of my ancestral homes. But that will have to be another story.

Bert Thornton, an Eastern Shore native, is a member of the Nabb Board of Directors.

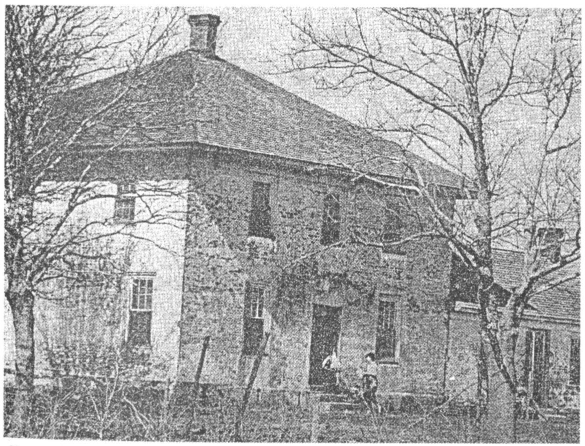
Photos courtesy of Bert Thornton.

Rackliffe House

By Director G. Ray Thompson, Ph.D.

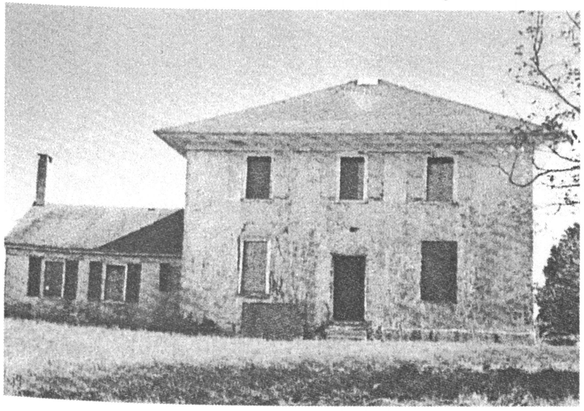


Rackliffe House as it looked about 1900 with the original roofline intact.



Rackliffe House with stucco siding after its roofline was rebuilt following the 1928 fire.

Rackliffe House with dependencies in late 20th century.



Introducing the House

Although the Rackliffe (Radcliffe, Ratcliffe) House stands today as an impressive mid-18th century brick structure located at a commanding position on Synepuxent (Sinepuxent) Bay near Assateague Island and the Atlantic Ocean, it had long been ignored. Its documentation in the original records of Somerset and Worcester counties is almost non-existent. No record of the date of its construction has been found, although architectural historians have posited a construction date of approximately 1740. The house appears to have been built by one of the many Charles Rackliffes who lived in the area, a Captain Charles Rackliffe, who died in 1752. The first Charles Rackliffe in the Seaside area of what was at that time Somerset County had, in 1679, patented a large tract of 2,200 acres along with his brother-in-law Edward Wale, with the intention of creating a landed patrimony for future generations of Rackliffes and Wales. Yet, the Rackliffe (Radcliffe, Ratcliffe) surname had disappeared from the Synepuxent area of the Seaside by the early 19th century. Gradually the powerful family had been all but forgotten, and few people associated the Rackliffe name with the home that stood on a knoll overlooking Synepuxent Bay. Denuded of its vibrant history, the house had come to take on a shadowy existence. Stories of paranormal happenings gave the house an even more ominous and eerie existence.

Until recently known as the Woodcock House, after a Salisbury family who owned the house during much of the 20th century, Rackliffe House has passed through many different hands since its construction. Today it belongs to the State of Maryland; in past years it served as one of the premier plantation manor houses of the area and then later as a tenant farm. Initially, the home had served the needs of the prominent Rackliffe family, who had patented the property in the third quarter of the 17th century. Soon after the beginning of the 19th century, through intermarriages and family relationships, the house passed out of the Rackliffe family into the hands of the Fassitt family. At about 1830, the Fassitts sold the property to another locally prominent family—the Diricksons. Catherine Rackliffe Dirickson, daughter of the last Rackliffe owner, was the last Rackliffe to live in the historic house. Throughout most of the 19th century the house was simply known as "the Dirickson House."

By the beginning of the 21st century, the once-impressive two-story Rackliffe House had lost almost all semblance of its original 18th century structure. Its rose-colored Flemish-bond brickwork had been obscured by layers of stucco and paint; a disastrous fire in 1928 had disfigured its interiors almost beyond recognition; partitions divided once-stately rooms. Even the steeply pitched roof with its kicked eves had been modified to a gently sloping hipped roof, inappropriate to the style of the impressive Georgian structure. Had he been recalled to life, Captain Charles Rackliffe, the probable builder of Rackliffe House, would have been hard-pressed to recognize his own home. Little about it would have signaled to him that this was his manor house, whose rooms he and later generations of Rackliffes had filled with finely crafted furnishings. The stories that had grown up around the house would have seemed alien to the Rackliffe owners—tales of ghostly happenings in its rooms, objects levitating, apparitions roaming the halls and even a harsh master murdered by his slaves.

Even today, after initial archaeological investigations and a survey of the original records of the area, much remains unknown about the house. Although its prominent position on Synepuxent Neck underscores its original importance, much about the house remains shrouded in mystery. Digging through the historical records has provided precious little about the history of the house. It was left to Tom Patton, a nearby resident with family connections to the home, to visualize what this careworn house could become—or re-become. Starting with a vintage picture from about 1900, which clearly showed the steeply-pitched roof of the house, Tom envisioned a house restored to its 18th-century elegance, a house which would serve as an educator for youth and adults of today about the prehistoric and historic past of the Worcester County's rich Seaside cultures. Patton's vision was to restore the house to its original appearance and to utilize the structure to explain the multiplicity of life on the Seaside in previous centuries. At the same time he saw the restored home serving as an educational center in which lectures and events could take place.

The Rackliffes: Acquiring the Land and Building a Home

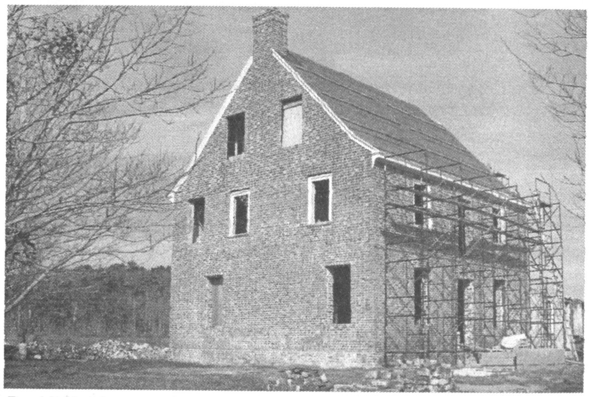
What we do know about the house is that its early owners, the Rackliffe family, were among the wealthiest and most prominent of all Seaside families, and that this family intermarried with the other prominent local families, forming an intimately inter-connected gentry that controlled the social and economic life of the Seaside area. The coastal area of Old Somerset (later Worcester County) had been settled slightly later than the bayside area; however, by 1670, large tracts of land were being patented by members of a tightly knit gentry consisting primarily of families from Virginia's Accomack and Northampton counties. Among those families who took up this Atlantic coast land were the Rackliffes, Purnells, Poynters, Selbys, Spences, Ennises, Wales (Whaleys), Fassitts and Turvilles, all of whom were to form a vast cousinage, connecting by blood those families who had taken up the coastal lands along the large creeks, at which docks were built and ships carrying Eastern Shore tobacco and grain sailed east to England and the continent, bringing an uncertain wealth to those colonial planters and factor/merchants.

Exactly when the Rackliffe family had arrived in America is unknown; however, by the mid-1660s when they first appear in the Virginia records, they were accumulating large tracts of land, eventually totaling nearly 3,400 acres. Charles Rackliffe, the immigrant ancestor, died intestate in 1665, one of the wealthiest men on Virginia's Eastern Shore. When his wife Elizabeth died in 1680, her will was probated leaving substantial property and furnishings to her sons and daughters, who were already well established and many of whom had by this time moved to Maryland. Charles Rackliffe, son of the immigrant Charles Rackliffe, and his brother-in-law Edward Wale (Whaley) patented 2,200 acres in present day Somerset County, Maryland, by 1679. The land may have originally been patented in Virginia and re-patented with the Calverts in Maryland to assure continued ownership of the property, just to the north of their Accomack, Virginia, holdings. Within a few years, preparatory to moving north into Maryland, Rackliffe sold much of his vast Virginia lands.

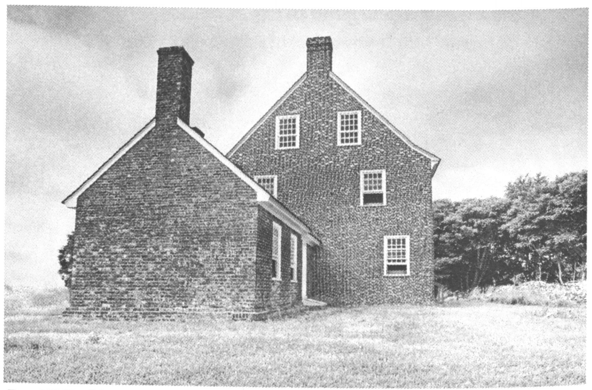
Generations of relatives would roam the halls of the Rackliffe houses on Synepuxent Neck. Rackliffe House, neighboring Genesar, Fassitt House and Henry's Grove were all great homes owned by the colonial planter gentry of the Seaside. A study of the family shows that with the marriages and multiple remarriages that took place Charles Rackliffe, the builder, had at least 96 close relatives—brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, and cousins and cousins by marriage, all of whom would have been familiar with Rackliffe House. In the next generation there were at least 143 equally close relatives who have been identified, living locally and likely frequenting the plantation home. The halls would have buzzed with discussion of crop failures and successes, politics, religion and economic life. In the background, dozens and dozens of young cousins and relatives of various degrees of consanguinity would have raced through the halls, up and down the stairs and out into the gardens sloping down to the water's edge as their elders strategized about the family's economic and social well-being.

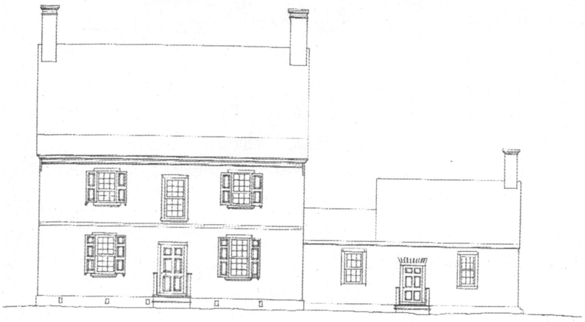
Although there is no description of the Rackliffe House in earlier records, the 1752 inventory of Captain Charles Rackliffe lists furnishings that indicate a large house. This surely would have been the Rackliffe House which came to be called the "Manor House." Listed in the inventory of the home were 10 beds and furnishings and much carved wooden furniture. Captain Charles Rackliffe seems a logical candidate as builder of the house because of the contents of his inventory that indicate a large home, much larger than the homes of the majority of his neighbors. His inventory of £1,166 was the largest of the time in the area and attests to his preeminent status and wealth. Married at least three times, he fathered at least 13 children, 11 of whom survived him, and who would have

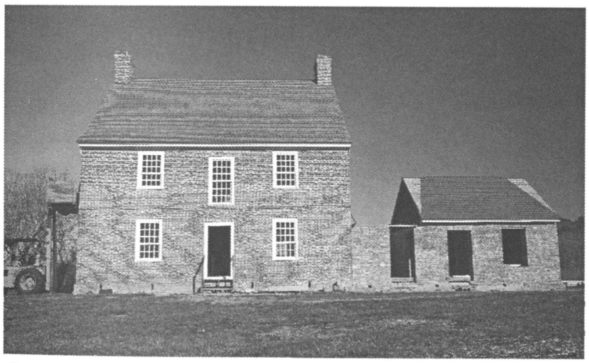
Rackliffe House under restoration, end view, 2006.


Rackliffe House under restoration, exterior, 2006.

Rackliffe House under restoration, interior.


Rackliffe House with kitchen, 2006. Courtesy of Robin Harrison.

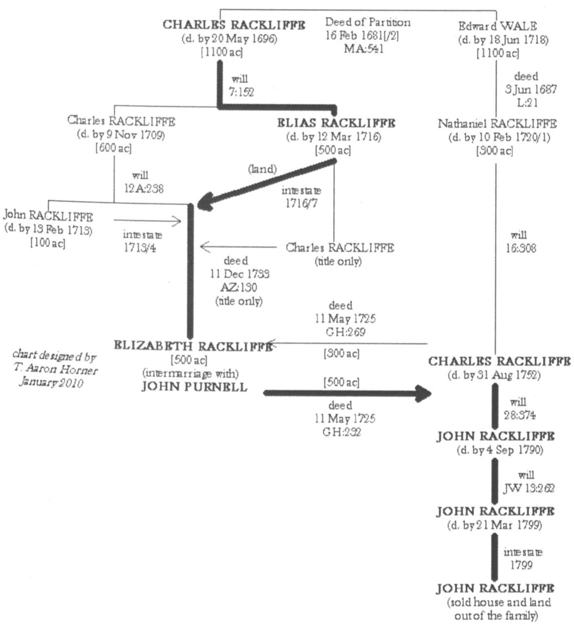




Rackliffe House nearing completion, 2007.

Title to Rackliffe House Property

(bold names and lines represent transfer)


CHARLES RACKLIFFE (d. by 20 May 1696) [1100 ac]
Deed of Partition 16 Feb 1681[/2] MA:541
Edward WALE (d. by 18 Jun 1718) [1100 ac]
will 7:152
deed 3 Jun 1687 L:21
Charles RACKLIFFE (d. by 9 Nov 1709) [600 ac]
ELIAS RACKLIFFE (d. by 12 Mar 1716) [500 ac]
Nathaniel RACKLIFFE (d. by 10 Feb 1720/1) [300 ac]
will 12A:238
(land)
intestate 1716/7
John RACKLIFFE (d. by 13 Feb 1713) [100 ac]
intestate 1713/4
Charles RACKLIFFE (title only)
deed 11 Dec 1733 AZ:130 (title only)
will 16:308
deed 11 May 1725 GH:269
[300 ac]
chart designed by T. Aaron Horner January 2010
ELIZABETH RACKLIFFE [500 ac] (intermarriage with) JOHN PURNELL
[500 ac]
deed 11 May 1725 GH:232
CHARLES RACKLIFFE (d. by 31 Aug 1752)
will 28:374
JOHN RACKLIFFE (d. by 4 Sep 1790)
will JW 13:262
JOHN RACKLIFFE (d. by 21 Mar 1799)
intestate 1799
JOHN RACKLIFFE (sold house and land out of the family)

been frequent visitors to the manor home of their birth. At his death, Charles willed the manor house to his son John who, like his father, was a prominent planter and factor, probably engaging in European shipping, importing British goods to his plantation for purchase by local planters and farmers. He was, no doubt, also heavily involved in an open-pan salt production enterprise on the site. The types of items listed in both the 1752 and 1790 inventories would indicate that the family had invested heavily in transatlantic shipping. The number of slaves in each inventory indicates a prosperous planter family. John Rackliffe, who had inherited the vast tract of land upon which the plantation house stood, died in 1790 and passed the land on to his son, also named John, who died by 1808, leaving four underage children, the eldest of whom was also named John Rackliffe. Soon the property passed out of Rackliffe hands. By the 19th century, the name Rackliffe, as a surname, became extinct in Worcester County.

The land on which the Rackliffe House was built was originally held by Charles Rackliffe, son of the immigrant. Through several conveyances, the property passed to Charles, grandson of the immigrant, who had only a daughter Elizabeth, who married John Purnell. In time, John and Elizabeth Purnell devised the land to Charles Rackliffe, son of Nathaniel Rackliffe and grandson of the immigrant Charles Rackliffe. That Charles Rackliffe is thought to have been the builder of the Manor House and, on his death in 1752, he devised the property to his son John, who in turn willed the property to his son John, who died in 1800. This John was the owner around whom the legend grew up that he was murdered by his slaves. If so, his wife soon followed him in death. Nothing in the Worcester records indicates such a murder. At any rate, John Rackliffe's property was devised to his four underage orphans, John, Rider, Kitty and Charlotte. The land was soon sold.

The earliest description of Rackliffe House itself is late, in 1808. At that time, John Rackliffe, the last adult male in the Rackliffe line had died under uncertain circumstances —perhaps, as folklore suggests, at the hands of his disgruntled slaves—and the property passed on to his four underage children. Since the property of underage orphans had to be kept intact and secure, the court appointed guardians and undertook regular "views and estimates" of the orphans' property. The 1808 Worcester Orphans Court records provide the first concrete description of the house—a two-and-half-story brick "dwelling house," 36 feet long by 33 feet wide. The upper floor consisted of a long rectangular ballroom running the length of the house. According to legend, the builder of Rackliffe was a lover of dancing. He built the only known ballroom on the Seaside in this house. Adjacent to the House was a brick kitchen (30 x 20 feet) in bad repair—perhaps this had been an earlier home of the family prior to the building of the Manor House itself, one which had been transformed into a kitchen once the new home was completed. Surrounding the Manor House were a number of other buildings—two old frame kitchens (20 x 15 feet), one "hewed log dwelling house of the same dimensions, and two smoke houses, one brick milk house, one old wooden store house, three old framed barns, one with an attached shed. Other structures mentioned were a stable and shed, an old henhouse, and a corncrib. Elsewhere on the property were four wooden houses, one of which was new and a second in "poor repair," a logged house, a grain house, one "round log" kitchen, two smoke houses, one old hen house and two corn cribs.

Through much of its existence, three families—the Rackliffes, the Diricksons and finally the Woodcocks—were the owners of the house. This fact may well have played a role in the survival of the home. Hopefully the home has been given a new lease on life with its ongoing restoration. Surely once again the halls of the Rackliffe Manor House will reverberate with the excited voices of children and with discussions, exhibits, and gentle conversations of those who continue to encourage the preservation of the past as a way to understanding the future.

Photos courtesy of Tom Patton except as otherwise noted.

The 19th Century American Letter as Literature: The Civil War Letters of Nehemiah Fitzgerald

By Lee M. Krempel

Letter writing is a practice fast becoming archaic. E-mail, cell phones and social networks keep people in near-constant contact regardless of whether they live near one another or have a post office nearby. If you want to ask your friend in Osaka, Japan, what you should have for dinner, you can easily do so in a matter of seconds. These developments have innumerable benefits, to be sure. In fact, I would contend that the positive aspects of these new avenues of communication far outweigh the negative. Still, the casual nature of our correspondence has inevitably led to something that could be considered significantly less artful. Mind you, I am not interested in some curmudgeonly, protectionist view of culture and technology. I have a cell phone, a Facebook account and a Mac computer. This is not meant as a "castigate modern society" piece. Rather, having recently read the interesting and artfully written letters of young Confederate Civil War soldier Nehemiah Fitzgerald, I wish to recall a time when the letter (or more broadly, correspondence) was carefully and thoughtfully constructed. The American letter is taught in our university classrooms not only as historical artifact, but often also as literature.

Nehemiah (Nemmie) FitzGerald was born in 1841 to Thomas and Margaret Anne Fitzgerald and hailed from Accomack County, Virginia. Not much is known in general about the workings of the Fitzgerald family. In fact, Nehemiah's own letters are the primary source of information regarding himself. Before enrolling for active service on May 31, 1861, Nehemiah was an honor student at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. His primary interests were natural philosophy, Greek, French, mathematics and literature. He was 19 years of age when he wrote the first letter contained in the Fitzgerald Family Collection. It is dated June 18, 1860, and addressed to his father, Thomas, in Hampton, Virginia, on the occasion of his term ending at the University of Virginia. It is short in length, with the primary purposes of making plans for a return home and inquiring about money ("I believe I have enough money to bring me home, but if it is convenient for you, I wish you to send me $5 in order to buy some few things ..."). Though formal by today's standards, when compared to Nehemiah's Civil War letters, this first example is quite simple. Nehemiah's experiences in the war and his maturation as a young man are reflected in the evolution of his writing as it becomes more complex, both thematically and structurally.

The next letter in the collection is written nearly two years later on February 12, 1862. Much has changed; Nehemiah is fighting in the war for the Confederates in the "2nd Co., Richmond Howitzers, 1st Va. Artillery" (the letter is written from an encampment near Bowling Green, Virginia), and the sophistication of his letters has grown appreciably. While camped at Richmond, Nehemiah received word of his father's death and writes this letter to inquire as to the circumstances of his death. Of utmost concern to him is his mother's welfare:

> Notwithstanding that I was so totally in the dark as to the affairs at home, I could not console myself with the reflection that there was but one course for Mother to pursue in order to secure herself from want and danger and that source I am glad to see she has already taken, although late in doing so. When on the Eastern Shore, I can rest assured she is among friends, who will consult her welfare and safety.

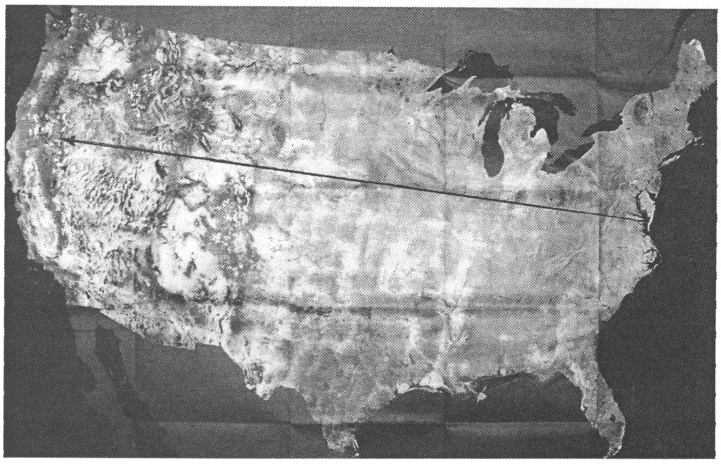
Various reasons could be cited for Nehemiah's personal and compositional growth; simple maturity, further study and reading, as well as his experience with—and exposure to—diverse places and people. It would be overstating the case to claim that Nehemiah was of extraordinary, towering literary stature. In fact, many letters of this time period are well constructed, detailed and formal. Nevertheless, many of Nehemiah's letters are fine examples of this notion of the letter as literary form, as found in Eastern Shore history.

Perhaps no better example exists in the Fitzgerald Collection than Nehemiah's letter to "Cousin Jennie" from Darkesville, Virginia, dated July 16, 1863. In it he recalls the events that took place at the Battle of Gettysburg, in which he was a participant. He begins, "I take this my earliest opportunity to reply to your last two letters, which I assure you were not only agreeable in themselves apart from any other consideration but also served to relieve me considerably of the tedium of the march." What follow are dated passages that recount his travels through Maryland and Pennsylvania en route to Gettysburg. He comments on the "generally neat appearance of these farms – they are well fenced in – dwellings outside are whitewashed – even the scattering rocks daubed," and proceeds to derive conclusions of judgment about the inhabitants based on his observations, thereby commenting on the state of the Union in general:

> Speaking of the neatness of the dwellings, I can't quite say as much for the inmates. As a general rule, the

> young ladies as well as old folks have no worldly use for stockings and shoes and I think hoops would be a very valuable acquisition to the appearance of the young ladies. … But what is more surprising than all is the utter want of spirit that these people possess.

Nehemiah shrewdly seizes an opportunity to make a political and social point while rendering a simple description of the Pennsylvania landscape and its people. The character of this particular letter is quite interesting. It is clearly meant to serve multiple purposes: to update his family on his current circumstances, a recapitulation of battle experience, to inquire after information on family news and to bolster morale for the war. However, apart from personal and political concerns, many passages of this letter are clearly meant to approach a certain literary quality, such as the following description of battle action at Gettysburg on July 3: "… the action opened early – fighting severe on all sides – a large number of our guns were concentrated on the enemy and when they belched forth their murderous contents it seemed as if the earth had given way to some violent convulsions of nature." When was the last time you received an e-mail or text message worded in such a way? Mr. FitzGerald could have been content to simply design his letter pragmatically, albeit well constructed, but instead he attempts to infuse it with a poetic element, seemingly for its own sake.



In his last letter before the end of the war, written March 16, 1864, just over a year before Union victory, Nehemiah addresses his mother. In what is a recurring theme throughout the letter, Nehemiah begins by addressing an apparently bothersome (to him) habit of inconsistent reciprocation of correspondence on behalf of his family, his mother included: "I would not think it difficult for you to send me now and then a letter," Nehemiah writes, with what seems to be a degree of sarcasm. Pleas for news and letters are scattered throughout Mr. Fitzgerald's writings. Also in this particular letter are more words of patriotic encouragement for the Confederate cause. Considering the fact that the next letter on record comes a full eight months after the war has ended in Confederate defeat, the following grand passage (in literary terms) takes on a degree of irony:

> The confident sentiment of our country at this time is that Peace will soon shed its blessings over the broad land of our Confederacy. This public opinion seems to have no definite foundation but everybody says it is coming and therefore it must be so. God grant it only be so! The people at home are bravefully struggling against domestic trouble while the Army, with unusual confidence, are waiting to be led against the enemy and victory will certainly be ours. The active campaign will very soon commence and those Pennsylvanians will again for a season shout for mercy at rebel hands.

Nehemiah's strongly patriotic tone intertwined with a sense of divine manifest destiny makes him sound much like a Confederate Whitman. This is crucial to what makes his Civil War letters so compelling. Nehemiah's letters often link multiple themes together, such as religion, politics, family and more. He uses allusion, appeals to the divine, propagandistic elements and a literary-quality language, all adding layers of meaning and aesthetic appeal. I can not help but wonder what one of these Civil War letters might look like were it written today, in what might be called "text language," or the extremely abbreviated and often superficial form of writing that tends to favor brevity and hyper-literalness over construction and subtext. A line of Nehemiah's letter might look something like this: "Brb, I'm @ the civil war. Imho, this war is not gr8, lol. Luv u ma, ttyl."[1]

The final letter from Nehemiah contained in the Fitzgerald Family Collection is dated September 17, 1887, was sent to "Brother Charlie" and concerns a "prospecting trip." Its contents are outside the scope of this article, which has endeavored to briefly explore several of his Civil War letters as literature. If one should be interested in the whole of the Fitzgerald family letters (including many more written by Nehemiah), the collection of letters can be found at the Nabb Research Center in Elizabeth Leah Reed's "We Come from Island People on Virginia's Eastern Shore." It is quite worth exploring, as Nehemiah traveled quite extensively after the war and finally settled in California. His letters, though they grow increasing pragmatic, remain interesting reading. Without condemning modern forms of correspondence, which are quite useful and interesting in their own right, we should not forget the great American letter of yesteryear. Allow them to interest us, speak to us and hopefully inspire us to simply take a little more time in our own correspondences; to craft them, to choose the words carefully, to make them mean something.

Endnote

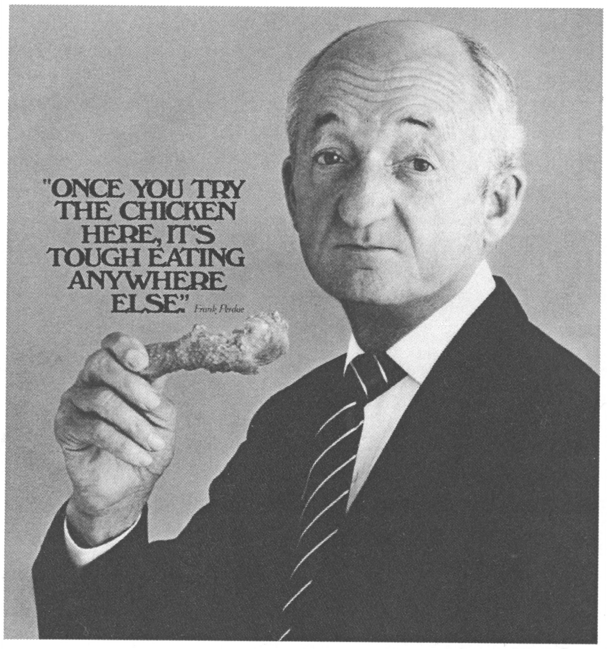
[1] Key: "brb" – be right back
"Imho" – in my humble opinion
"gr8" – great
"lol" – laughing out loud (applied liberally and arbitrarily in text-language)
"u" – you
"ttyl" – talk to you later

Note:
Copies of the letters written by Nehemiah Fitzgerald are in the Nabb Center collections.

Intern Lee Krempel, a student in the Salisbury University English program, interned at the Nabb Center during the 2009-10 academic year.

A Tough Man Markets Tender Chickens: An Advertising Success Story

by Andrea Black


"ONCE YOU TRY THE CHICKEN HERE, IT'S TOUGH EATING ANYWHERE ELSE."
Frank Perdue

Perdue Farms, Inc, a family-owned poultry and agricultural company, was not always a multinational corporation with widespread brand recognition that it is known for today. The company's success required years of quality improvement, gaining loyal customers and, possibly most important, developing a strong advertising campaign. Perdue Farms, Inc. conducted extensive research when selecting an agency to represent the advertising and commercial needs of the corporation. The three-year long selection process resulted in a solid campaign catering to widespread national and international growth that continues to this day.

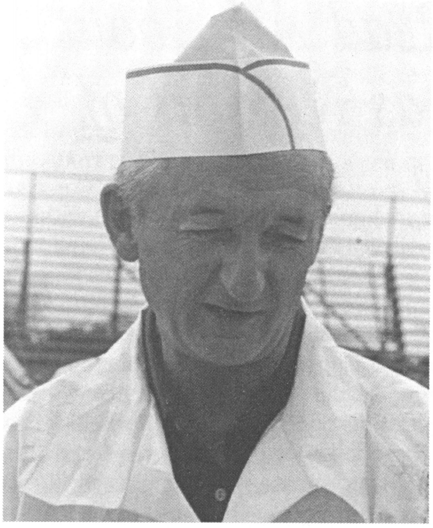
Prior to Franklin P. Perdue's launching of a national advertising campaign, Perdue Farms, Inc. had been a modest family-owned company whose products were recognized mainly in the areas surrounding the Eastern Shore. Arthur W. Perdue had started the poultry company in 1920. At that time the company was not a poultry distributor but, rather, a "backyard table-egg business." Arthur Perdue built the foundation of what people recognize today as Perdue Farms, Inc. However, it was not until Franklin Perdue took over the company in 1950 that the corporation experienced "a period of phenomenal growth." This growth was, in part, a result of the company's investments in creating higher-quality products. However, as noted on the company's Web site, most of the growth was associated with the "now-famous advertising campaign, which stressed his stubborn commitment to quality, [with which] he made the Perdue brand a household name." It was Frank Perdue's goal to make Perdue chicken the most recognized and purchased brand in the nation, and he used advertising to make this goal attainable.

It was imperative to Frank Perdue to select an advertising agency that could best represent the company and meet all of its needs. The process of finding an agency with a good fit was a long and tedious process. Perdue began the search for an advertising agency in 1970, but it was not until 1973 that an agency was finally chosen to represent Perdue Farms, Inc. Before even looking at different possible advertising corporations, Frank Perdue thoroughly researched how a company should go about selecting an agency, including what to look for in an agency, what size would best meet the requirements of Perdue Farms, Inc., and how different kinds of agencies could benefit the company. He consulted the American Advertising Association as well as several other organizations to gain tips before beginning the selection process. Perdue then developed a comprehensive and detailed questionnaire to be given to candidate advertising agencies. The questionnaire was comprised of 22 questions ranging from simple "yes" or "no" answers to questions about agency finances and billing. The questions were used to provide Perdue with a complete knowledge of each agency's structure, financial health, size, as well as many other aspects of a company. Examples include: "How long has your company been in business?"; "What methods do you employ to check advertising results?"; and "Is there any tangible evidence of success with current clients?" The standardized questionnaire allowed Perdue to compare each advertising corporation against one another. He was particularly interested in acquiring information regarding each candidate agency's current clients, wanting to know the number of clients they had and their billings for the previous year, the names of their clients as well as their addresses, phone numbers, and their products and product category. Perdue then contacted the agencies' clients to ask them another standardized set of questions to determine their satisfaction in working with their advertising company. The clients were asked simple questions including: "What impressed you most?"; "What is your biggest confliction point?"; and "Have you had any success stories with this agency?" The client responses enabled Perdue to have a better understanding of the advertising agencies actual abilities to provide a successful service to Perdue Farms, Inc. rather than solely relying on the word of advertising executives guaranteeing great services.

Frank Perdue's meticulous selection process, however, did not come without its complications. Several advertising corporation executives were not pleased with his questioning of their clients. Several companies sent letters to Perdue politely asking him to discontinue his inquiries through clients. When Perdue did not stop, one agency took themselves out of the running for the company's business. Others disliked Perdue's specific and somewhat intrusive questionnaire, leading them to exit the selection process.

Despite these obstacles, Perdue had a large variety of advertising agencies from which to choose, narrowing the field to 28 agencies, all located in New York City. After the candidates had completed the questionnaires and Perdue had analysed and compared them, finalists were chosen. Two of the finalists included Jack Byrne Advertising, Inc. and Scali, McCabe & Sloves, Inc. Following this selection, Perdue sent letters to all of the candidates notifying them of the company's selection of finalists and, by extension, advising the others of their loss in representing Perdue Farms, Inc.

Frank Perdue's final decision was the selection of Scali, McCabe & Sloves, Inc. (SMS). The New York City-based advertising corporation met many of the requirements Perdue had in mind for an advertising agency. It was the correct size, the executives, including the creative director and the chief executive, worked well with Perdue and other associates, and their advertising ideas and pricing met Perdue's criteria. A large amount of the decision to hire the agency was based on client responses regarding their business with Scali, McCabe & Sloves, Inc. The agency had a strong clientele at the time, many of them being well-known corporations including Volvo, Xerox Corporation and the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare Office of Educational Opportunities in Washington, D.C. Upon inquiries conducted with Scali, McCabe & Sloves, Inc. clients, Perdue received highly positive feedback concerning the quality of the advertising agencies services. When questioned, the vice president of Volvo, Inc. stated: "Sales have beaten all records for fourteen consecutive months and they attribute advertising as the key factor." Xerox Corporation also had positive feedback about their business with SMS. Xerox's advertising manager commented they are "very flexible, highly creative, and good business strategy people. They will listen on marketing and sales problems but are strongest in creative thinking. They have promoted sales promotions excellently." Their creative strengths and compatibility with Perdue led to the hiring of Scali, McCabe & Sloves, Inc. to conduct the company's marketing endeavors.



Scali, McCabe & Sloves, Inc. was the best fit for Perdue Farms, Inc. and as a result greatly strengthened its brand and allowed exceptional growth to take place. Within a few years, commercials, both television and radio, were produced and highly publicized. Scali, McCabe & Sloves created a strong advertising campaign, highlighting the company's quality chicken and, later, their many other product lines including whole turkeys, parts, skinless products, oven roasters, etc. Almost all commercials featured Frank Perdue, whose facial features, some say, were somewhat similar to a chicken. The campaigns over the years were highly successful. In the late 1980s, Spanish television and radio commercials were beginning to be produced and aired. The marketing strategies and creative advertising campaigns led to Franklin Perdue's success in making Perdue Farms, Inc. a highly recognized brand nationally and internationally.

Today, Perdue Farms, Inc. is a thriving corporation that continues to grow. Perdue put annual sales in 2009 above $4.6 billion. The company is currently ranked the third largest poultry company in the U.S., and is also a major player in international markets including China and Mexico. Jim Perdue, current chairman, stated that Perdue Farms, Inc. "provides food and agricultural products and services to customers in more than 50 countries." There is no doubt that Perdue Farms, Inc. would not be achieving the same accomplishments it has reached over the years without the selection of Scali, McCabe & Sloves, Inc. Franklin Perdue's tedious and lengthy process allowed for the corporation's ability to reach its goal of Perdue becoming a household name.

Andrea Black is an intern working with University Archivist David Ranzan in the Perdue Archives, which will be a feature of the new Perdue Museum of Business and Entrepreneurship at Salisbury University.

Photos courtesy of the Perdue Museum of Business and Entrepreneurship at Salisbury University

Faces of the Eastern Shore

The unique faces of Delmarva reflect qualities universal to all of us, yet still reveal the independent spirit for which the region is known. A wide variety of mediums, including Daguerreotypes, Ambrotypes and tintypes, silhouettes, caricatures, and sculpture, provide an opportunity to experience a sense of recognition that comes from meeting neighbors, old friends and ancestors in this absorbing exhibit, "Faces of the Eastern Shore," opening August 30. Nabb Center Gallery hours are Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 1-4 p.m., or by appointment (please call 410-543-6312 for further information).

Read All About It: Newspapers as Mirrors of Local History

by Matt Hollis

Even at the dawn of exponential technology, when citizens of the younger generations are often more likely to receive their news from a pastiche of Internet blogs, Web sites and feeds, the physical media of the real newspaper itself remains just as important now as it was before the online explosion of information. Whereas the computerized text often feels cold and straightforward, the physical medium of the newspaper contains nostalgic warmth imbued within its pages. One type of newspaper in particular appears to have fallen by the wayside in regard to this rapid technological advancement. Local newspapers, created and delivered to the local citizenry, often act as a conduit of a celebratory atmosphere; our accomplishments as both individuals and as a community are given considerable time in a local newspaper. With the bright and flashy Web pages of the mainstream news organizations, it is often easy for many locals (my generation especially) to obsess over the "big picture": the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, politics on the national level. But in receiving the majority of our news from these wide-scoping sources, we tend to lose sight of our heritage as citizens of Delmarva and the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The Eastern Shore prides itself on its bountiful agricultural production and advancement, displaying its feats and achievements in 4-H sponsored festivals and other such public spectacles. The Eastern Shore is also undoubtedly forever chained to that "Great Shellfish Bay" just west of our homes. Many local citizens are concerned not only with harvesting what consumable treasures the waters of the Chesapeake have to offer, but protecting and conserving the same bay to ensure these activities continue for years to come. Unfettered maritime regulars and ambitious tourists alike still sail, ski and swim the waters of the Bay and its many tributaries in spite of growing accounts of harmful pollutants and overgrowth of algae.

But this is where my personal knowledge of the place I grew up in ends: Were we always like this? Were there noticeable changes in our behavior, our celebrations and what we celebrated from a decade, two decades, or even a century ago? The place to find the answers is not within the confines of monolithic news Web pages; it is instead within local newspapers that focus on all things local: culture, tourism, business, agriculture. After browsing through quite a few local newspapers ranging from the beginning of the 20th century to our entry into the 21st, local newspapers have undergone a fascinating metamorphosis of style and content, while somehow maintaining their original ethos: to report on that which is most dear and celebrated within our local communities. Due to the enormous range of newspapers published up and down the Eastern Shore, I will focus particularly on a few select issues of local newspapers from Pocomoke City (Worcester County), Salisbury (Wicomico County) and Crisfield (Somerset County), Maryland. These select papers are from the beginning of the century, pre-World War I, post-World War II and the 1970s. Each newspaper reveals only a small part of the entire portrait, yet the similarities in tone and subject of these select papers over the decades illuminate the strengths and heritage of Delmarva.

The first newspaper I focus on is a May 1906 issue of Pocomoke City's *Ledger Enterprise*. The aspect of this local paper that struck me first was the simplicity of the format. Only the title of the paper and the sub-header itself are enlarged and given a unique font. The rest of the paper is separated into five columns and there are no pictures present. The absence of pictures and the simplicity of the layout may suggest a few things: one being that including photographs into newspapers was too difficult to do due to the new, expensive and time-consuming technology or that Delmarvans at the turn of the century were little concerned with the new technology as well as any sort of flashy gimmick.

The articles themselves confirm my hunch that Delmarvans pride in their agricultural pursuits was largely unchanging in demeanor. An article titled "Fruit Growers to Unite" delves into the creation of multiple committees of local farmers and businessmen, each with their own specialization in regard to advancement in fruit cultivation. There are committees for apples, pears and peaches; some of the more unexpected categories included nut cultures, asparagus, transportation and "new fruits." Another point of interest is that many of these committees include members of a College Park, Maryland, agricultural study on fungus diseases and horticultural bacteriology. The inclusion of such committees undermines the stereotype of Eastern Shore farmers as narrow-minded. On the contrary, they were more than willing to put into practice new and progressive forms of research to better protect future harvests.

Personal ads or reports on individuals within the community are far more numerous than the federally focused articles. There is an article promoting proof-reading and editing jobs for women. Although such jobs did not require a college education, an applicant was required to be an excellent speller and a "mistress of punctuation." While women were still denied the right to vote, Eastern Shore businesses saw the great economic

The Crisfield Times

potential of increasing female participation in the workplace.

Obituaries are also included, but they are found on the front page as opposed to the middle or rear of newspapers now in circulation. This emphasizes the importance of small communities and their often intimate involvement in their neighbors lives. Notices to creditors, new laws and court disputes were also published at the front of this particular paper. This may well be a testament to the increased involvement of the local populace in its own judicial and business affairs in comparison to the more centralized scope of citizens' participation today. A Miss Marie C. Jones wrote a poem that was printed in the top left corner of the front page titled "We Think of Thee," espousing the romanticized beauty of her surroundings and the importance of religious principles. "We Think of Thee" refers to both the devotion of the locals to God as well as a reminder to the community to focus on supporting or praying for less successful locals rather than themselves.

The November 29, 1923, issue of the *Wicomico News* shows a deviation from local papers 20 years earlier. The majority of the paper is focused on the photography of the developing industries, architecture and communal locales of Wicomico County. There are photographs of churches, shore-side households, new businesses, railroads and many more features. Certainly this special photographic edition marks a new epoch for Wicomico County. The inclusion of railroads and new modernized industrial buildings gives the impression that the area was active and celebrating its progress into the 20th century; at the same time photos of churches, households and personal photographs show the local's adherence to both an intimate individual focus and a communal focus.

Modern technology was portrayed in smaller businesses as well. Many pictures are of the exteriors and interiors of specific shops and restaurants; the photograph of the *Wicomico News* Building includes a caption declaring that modern equipment is to be lauded in increasing the newspaper's circulation. An interior snapshot of the G.M. Fisher Jewelry Company shows what appears to be up-to-date lighting fixtures and refurbished walls and carpeting. A snapshot of Salisbury Machine Works shows a line of new cars across the front of the building, with the caption: "Expert Mechanical Work Done Here." The photographs also preserve images of agricultural and maritime pursuits, showing crowds gathering for a local sale, a still of Senator William P. Jackson's "Homestead Dairy," multiple wharves and several photographs of Berlin, Maryland's Harrison's Nurseries, captioned as the "Largest Fruit Tree Growers in the World."

The April 28, 1939, *Crisfield Times* was the first local paper I had come across which most closely resembles a modern local paper. Photographs are now commonly mixed into the appropriate articles, and the paper itself is far more expansive than the versions of prior decades. This particular issue is in celebration of Crisfield's youth; blocked text on both sides of the newspaper's title attempt to persuade readers to "ask your merchant for baby coupons" and "support your favorite in the popular 'Baby Contest'." One of the front-page articles enlarged with bold black text states with apparent enthusiasm the growing competition over the year's baby contest. The article states that "hundreds of baby coupons flooded the ballot box at campaign headquarters." The bottom of the front page is adorned with eight pictures of various babies looking to win the title and the prizes and accolades that accompany it.

The other bold-titled article on the front-page enthusiastically describes a fundraising drive to help support the local libraries. This is exemplary of a tight-knit community supporting its local institutions and the sheer number of "co-captains" listed under the fund drive emphasizes how important libraries were to people in the area. One obituary is placed on the front page for a Mr. James B. Tawes, the former chairman of the board for Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church in Crisfield. While front-page obituaries in later years of local newspapers became increasingly scarce, this local businessman must have been considered by many to be an important supporter of this local religious institution, and his loss as a key figure in the church merited immediate notice to the community.

This particular issue also includes articles on Homemaker Club meetings, plans for non-commissioned dances by the armory, traffic tips from the Crisfield Automobile Club and many other sources of religious information. It is interesting to note that not a single business or agricultural article appears until the third page of the paper. This might well have to do with the attitude of the times, as the Great Depression was still weighing heavy on the minds of the Eastern Shore public. A front-page focus shows that the locals were more interested in news on a positive note, a celebration of the times and culture as an escape from the economic hardships endured at that time.

This trend seems to continue up to the end of the Second World War. A *Crisfield Post* issue from February 1948 has two obituaries on the front page, as well as an article on the marriage of Olive Pauline Maddox to Lamar B. Ellis of Georgia. The article title "Miss Maddox Is Bride of Georgia Man In Ceremony Last Friday" suggests that marriage with others outside of the immediate area was rare and deserved mention. The end of the war and subsequent economic recovery in America are evident with increased placement of business articles toward the front of the paper. The front page contains three articles on local businesses, as opposed to one on the third page of the April 1939 issue. This reflects an increasing confidence of the Crisfield populace. The second page of the newspaper includes a briefing on activities in the "Maryland Farm Front" and an article on exports of chickadees to benefit damaged European agricultural areas. At the end of the article a bold text affirms the importance of the Eastern Shore farmers, with the phrase "Small Towns Will Give the Answer." In spite of declining prices for grain and meat, ".... the farmers and small town residents, in the final analysis, have a greater influence on the life of the nation than many suspect."

For the last paper, I will fast forward to 1978. The March 17 edition of the *Crisfield Times* is once again indicative of a common narrative found throughout these papers, but augmented to suit the political and social climate of the time. The increase in individual wealth after the 1940s and the constant threats of the Cold War era motivated all communities to become more responsible for their own well-being rather than relying on edicts from state or federal bodies of governance. Articles such as "Tangier Residents Oppose Mail Service Re-Routing" reflect increasing vocal opposition to the state's reorganizing and reforming various services to which locals had become accustomed. The author of the article was Mary A. Shores, the secretary of the Citizens Committee of Tangier Island. The importance of this is that the *Crisfield Times* saw fit to allow Mrs. Shores a platform to air her organization's grievances. The connection between Crisfield and Taylor is evident, as the mailing hub for Tangier involved Crisfield residents; reading this article would have given them an opportunity to either join or oppose such a movement that may have otherwise been ignored.

Despite this particular article and other various editorials found throughout the paper, the majority of the news is related to agricultural successes and problems, information on religious services, and the maritime industries. The most notable focus within this paper is on the influence of crabbing within the community. The front page applauds the Crisfield High "Crabbers," a basketball team victorious in the Maryland state basketball tournament, and a separate article describes an upcoming local seafood cookbook from the National Hard Crab Derby Association. The back of the paper reviews an extension of the oyster season and striped bass fishing regulations. There are also articles on contest-winning chicken dishes and descriptions of the 1978 Delmarva Poultry Industry fundraising efforts. One of the last articles, titled "DNR Predicts Good Year for Crabs," ends this particular issue on a positive and optimistic note.

The benefits of looking through local newspapers in different time periods cannot be underestimated. The narrative may seem repetitive, but it only highlights the unique status and the strength of Eastern Shore culture. Regardless of national news, the papers of these smaller communities continually emphasize religious participation, local activities and the current agricultural phenomena. When many of us, in the age of the Internet, look to the apparently insurmountable dilemmas facing the nation and world, local newspapers, both historic and recent, allow the reader reprieve from the "big picture" and instead focus on the smaller stories that helped to create a localized history of the Delmarva area.

Matthew Hollis is a History Department graduate assistant working with the Nabb Center.

Amy Pritchett Anderson Waddelow Fooks: An Ancestral Footnote

by Bonnie B. Barnidge

The Eastern Shore of Virginia can be proud of being the site of the first English-speaking play performed in this new world. In 1663, the original 1632 Accawmacke County on the Eastern Shore of Virginia became two counties, Northampton and Accomack. Fowkes Tavern, an "ordinary" or tavern, had been opened in Pungoteague, in Accomack County. It accommodated travelers with meals and lodging, served as the county court when in session and functioned as a community center.

Fowkes Tavern hosted *Ye Bare and Ye Cubbe* in 1665, a play that was likely full of slapstick comedy with a deeper level of meaning for colonists in Virginia. The Bare (bear) was an allegory for the king or English power while the Cubbe (cub) represented the Colony of Virginia. The cub would have been mischievous and devious. The performance would likely have provided comic relief to colonists experiencing grief over the effects of the Navigation Acts on their cash crops, especially tobacco. Many colonists, including many prestigious ones, were in serious debt.

Amy Anderson and her husband, Thomas Fowkes, were the tavern keepers where this historic 17th-century play was performed. The chance discovery that Amy Anderson Fowkes was my direct ancestor led to my initial interest in the play and its historical context. I wanted to better imagine what life was like for my ancestor and her contemporaries. I was awed by many differences in the world of the 1600s as compared to my own. I was intrigued to find many seeds of our contemporary culture and worldview, including our independent spirit, growth toward tolerance and diversity, our developing sense of community and, finally, a responsible role for women.

The ancestor who brought me to write this essay was Amy Pritchett Anderson Waddelow Fowkes of Fowkes' Tavern, where the play was performed. Reflecting on her life and environment enhanced my understanding of who she was and of those with whom she mingled, socialized and networked. She had married Thomas Fowkes (also ffowkes, Fooks or Foulke) by 1662. I have not been able to find Amy's maiden name. By researching the probable birth dates of her known children, I have speculated that she was born around 1623, in Virginia or England. Her oldest child, Richard Pritchett, may have been about 11 years old when his stepfather, my ancestor, Garrett Anderson, died in 1648 (Richard could have been born in about 1637 as women often bore their first child at 14 or 15 years). Thus, Amy's birth year is perhaps about 1623. Amy seems to have been stepmother (called mother-in-law, which probably meant stepmother) to Garrett's oldest son Peter and mother to their four children, Garrett, Amy, William and Elizabeth Anderson. Garrett Anderson, who bought a Negro, John, from Mrs. Charles Harmer for 1,200 pounds of tobacco, was probably my ancestor. A purchase of this magnitude indicates he was a man of prosperity. Slavery was becoming an acceptable institution; other local records indicate that Garrett was a respected member of the community. After Garrett died, Amy married Nicholas Waddelow (also spelled Waddelowe, Waddeloe or Wadloe). They had three daughters, Temperance, Patience and Comfort Waddelow. Nicholas was a Quaker. While some Quakers fled Virginia due to recently passed anti-Quaker laws, Nicholas had become a respected citizen, evidencing a pocket of tolerance. Nicholas died in 1660. The property he had acquired earlier that year was brought by his widow, Amy, to her fourth husband, Thomas Fowkes. On that property, they built and operated Fowkes' Ordinary.

Amy is known to have married four times, first to a Pritchett, then to Garrett Anderson, then Nicholas Waddelow and finally to Thomas Fowkes. Women were not allowed to own property by English law. Yet, partnerships with their spouses brought many women respect and an opportunity to lead. Some Virginia men began a custom of willing property to their wives rather than their oldest son. Thus, widows could bring property, along with their children and stepchildren, to their next marriage. Death often came early; life was usually short. Given Amy's longevity, it would not be unusual for her to have married four times and to have acquired wealth, status and property, as well as children, along the way. Marriage in her century was not usually for love, but rather a business arrangement needed for survival as well as having and caring for children. In their turn, children usually cared for their parents and stepparents as they aged. Amy Pritchett Anderson Waddelow Fowkes died in 1678. If born c. 1623, Amy lived to approximately 55 years; this was indeed a long life.

Thomas Fowkes died in 1674, four years before Amy. In his will, he left Fowkes' Tavern to his Quaker stepdaughter, Comfort Waddelow, and her husband, Ambrose White. (This act seems another example of tolerance for Quakers and of caring about stepchildren). People at this time were re-evaluating their values and priorities as evidenced by the development of a fluid class structure based on ability and achievement rather than birth. There were pockets of tolerance for those of differing religious persuasions, such as Quakers.

Relationships with the native Indians were usually peaceful. Indians taught settlers skills applicable to their new environment and were, in turn, often treated fairly. They were entitled to take grievances against settlers to court, and some won. Yet, as the century progressed and the colonists needed more land, Indians faced hostility, notably from the powerful Edmund Scarborough. Although he was sometimes found guilty in courts for his actions against Indians, he was not tried for some of his murderous deeds and leadership. Were Indians afraid to bring charges against him? Were community leaders supporting Scarborough? Economics also seemed to bring unfair treatment to the friendly and helpful Indians. As the colonists needed land, their fairness to the native population began to evaporate. Many Indians died from European diseases or fled north to friendlier territory.

As to Africans, their human tragedy in this country began in Virginia. The indentured servant system, declining by the end of the 17th century, could not supply all of the needed labor for Eastern Shore planters. Indentured servants became free after a specified number of years. When Africans were first brought to Virginia they were regarded as indentured servants, entitled to eventual freedom. The economic need for labor, especially for tobacco crops, outweighed initial ideas of tolerance. Slavery became legal and life-long within the century. Slaves became a critical component for economic success in Virginia.

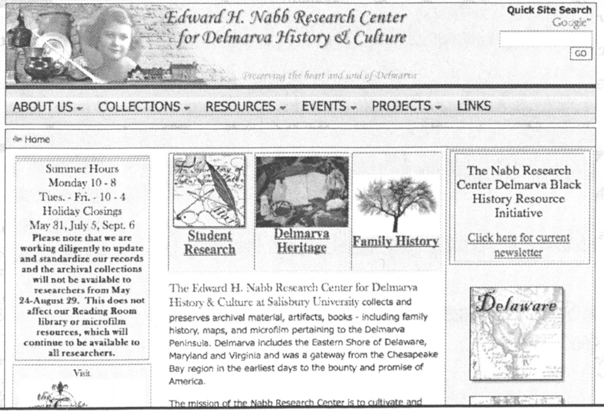
In looking at these 17th-century settlers and *Ye Bare and Ye Cubbe,* we can see the new, early thrust toward an independent spirit. Although the Crown and Parliament appointed government officials, there was representational, elected leadership, much favored by the community. Ironically, while such representational governance fostered a degree of tolerance by encouraging upward mobility in class status and prosperity, the desire for power and wealth also led to intolerance and even violence.

Amy Anderson died as the widow of Thomas Fowkes and three preceding husbands. According to early records, she had cared for eight children as well as a stepchild. She had achieved prosperity, community status and respect. At her death, her will indicates that she held considerable property. Many of her children and grandchildren married well and became prosperous landholders. She seems to have been a trusted wife and partner for her husbands, and a good provider for her children and stepchild. I continue to wonder what her role would have been in regard to the play, *Ye Bare and Ye Cubbe.* Thomas Fowkes was there, but would she have been? Often women stayed away from gatherings when the men were drinking and carousing. On the other hand, her help at the performance may have been needed.

I have come to believe that our national history texts have tended to downplay the importance of 17th-century Virginia in the development of this nation. The Virginia settlement predated the Puritan arrival and has had a profound influence on our national character, customs, government and laws. The 1665 performance of *Ye Bare and Ye Cubbe* in Virginia indicates an early aspiration toward liberty, against the sovereignty of distant England.

Bonnie Barnidge, a Nabb Research Center member, is a descendant of Amy Anderson Fowkes of Fowkes' Tavern, where Ye Bare and Ye Cubbe was performed in 1665.

Find information and listings of upcoming events by visiting our Web site at **http://nabbhistory.salisbury.edu**



Summer Hours
Monday 10 - 8
Tues. - Fri. - 10 - 4
Holiday Closings
May 31, July 5, Sept. 6

Please note that we are working diligently to update and standardize our records and the archival collections will not be available to researchers from May 24-August 29. This does not affect our Reading Room library or microfilm resources, which will continue to be available to all researchers.

The Nabb Research Center Delmarva Black History Resource Initiative

Click here for current newsletter

The Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History & Culture at Salisbury University collects and preserves archival material, artifacts, books - including family history, maps, and microfilm pertaining to the Delmarva Peninsula. Delmarva includes the Eastern Shore of Delaware, Maryland and Virginia and was a gateway from the Chesapeake Bay region in the earliest days to the bounty and promise of America.

The mission of the Nabb Research Center is to cultivate and

Visit our Web site to learn about our constantly-growing collections and resources.

News, Events and Exhibits

Goodbye

I say a fond thank you and goodbye to the Nabb Research Center community as I retire this June. As a part of a dedicated staff, volunteer and student team, it has been a fulfilling effort these last 13 years to collect and preserve the history and culture of Delmarva in small things forgotten but saved.
- Iris Powell.

Iris Powell c. 1995, after arriving in Salisbury.

Memorial Gift

In honor of the late Tarleton Small, father of Dr. Clara Small, Nabb board member, the following monographs have been purchased and are available for research purposes:

Behrendt, Stephen D, A J H Latham and David Northrup. *The Diary of Antera Duke: An Eighteenth Century African Slave Trader.* Oxford University Press, 2010.

Edwards, Laura F. *The People and their Peace: Legal Culture and the Transformation of Inequality in the Post-Revolutionary South.* University of North Carolina Press, 2009.

Falola, Toyin and Kevin D Roberts. *The Atlantic World, 1450-2000.* Indiana University Press, 2008.

Foster, Frances Smith. *'Till Death or Distance Do Us Part: Love and Marriage in African America.* Oxford University Press, 2010.

Gaspar, David B and Darlene C. Hine. *Black Women and Slavery in the Americas: More than Chattel*. Indiana University Press, 1996.

Hine, Darlene C. and Jacqueline McLeod. *Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora.* Indiana University Press, 1999.

Horton, James O. and Lois E Horton. *Slavery and the Making of America.* Oxford University Press, 2005.

Irons, Charles F. *The Origins of Proslavery Christianity: White and Black Evangelicals in Colonial and Antebellum Virginia.* University of North Carolina Press, 2008.

Jeffrey, Julie R. *The Great Silent Army of Abolitionism: Ordinary Women in the Antislavery Movement.* University of North Carolina Press, 1998.

Johnson, Kimberley. Reforming *Jim Crow: Southern Politics and State in the Age Before Brown.* Oxford University Press, 2010.

Jordan, Ryan P. *Slavery and the Meeting House: The Quakers and the Abolitionist Dilemma, 1820-1865.* Indiana University Press, 2007.

McGary, Howard and Bill E. Lawson. *Between Slavery and Freedom: Philosophy and American Slavery.* Indiana University Press, 1992.

Moye, J. Todd. Freedom Flyers: *The Tuskegee Airmen of World War II.* Oxford University Press, 2010.

Ogundiran, Akinwumi and Toyin Falola. *Archaeology of Atlantic Africa and the African Diaspora.* Indiana University Press, 2010.

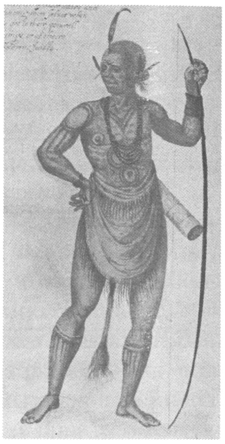
Terborg-Penn, Rosalyn. *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920.* Indiana University Press, 1998.

Washington, Booker T. *Up From Slavery: An Autobiography.* Indo-European Publishing Co., 2009.

Wood, Amy Louise. *Lynching and Spectacle: Witnessing Racial Violence in America, 1890-1940.* University of North Carolina Press, 2009.

Upcoming Events

We have an exciting line up of special events, fascinating lecturers and exhibits featuring our collections. Mark your calendars!



Exploration and First Contact: Delmarva, 1609-1732
Exhibit, Nabb Center Gallery
August 30, 2010-May 20, 2011
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1-4 p.m.
or by appointment

The first contact with Europeans brought profound change for Native Americans and the landscape. Maps, artifacts and documents reveal the early period of exploration by Europeans and illustrate their subsequent domination of the Eastern Shore.

Faces of the Eastern Shore
Exhibit, Nabb Center Gallery
August 30-October 22
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1-4 p.m. or by appointment

The people of the Eastern Shore have been described as independent cusses with a fierce local pride. See some of the faces that exemplify the character of the people of Delmarva, showing their spirit, way of life and legacy.

Wetipquin: A Discussion with Regional Author Edward Taylor
Lecture, Nabb Center Gallery
Saturday, September 18, 2 p.m.

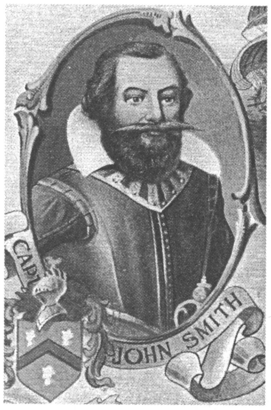
Retired educator Ed Taylor discusses his memoirs and recently published book, *On Yonder's End*, a fictional account of an African-American family's history from slavery to the late 20th century.

Kin and Sin: Early Settlers of the Eastern Shore With Vaughn Baker
Lecture, Nabb Center Gallery
Thursday, September 30, 7 p.m.

Investigating alliances and networking among families opens new doors to discovering the earliest Chesapeake settlers and their interconnectedness. Vaughn Baker discusses the importance of family connections to the development of the earliest Eastern Shore settlements.

Telling Your Story: A Gift to Those You Love
Workshop, Nabb Center Gallery
With Joan Katz
Saturday, October 2, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Memories, photos, keepsakes, and public and private data help write your legacy. Historian and educator Joan Katz leads this daylong workshop on writing your memoirs. $25 per person; please bring a notebook and pencil (or laptop computer) and a bag lunch. Call 410-543-6312 for reservations; class size will be small and seating is limited.



The Devil Is in the Details: Politics, Mapping of Delmarva and the John Smith Chesapeake Trail

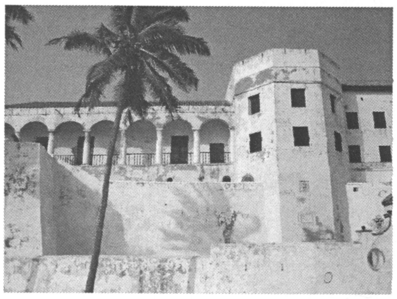
Lecture, Nabb Center Gallery
With Dr. Michael Scott
Thursday, October 14, 7 p.m.
Professor Michael Scott, of Salisbury University's Geography and Geosciences Department, discusses his work on pinpointing Capt. John Smith's route through the Chesapeake Bay and up the Nanticoke River.

Commemorate the Great Fire of Salisbury

Exhibit, Downtown Plaza
October 14-16
FireFest 2010 is coming! The Nabb Research Center, in conjunction with Urban Salisbury, the City of Salisbury and the Salisbury Fire Department commemorates the 124th anniversary of the greatest cataclysm to hit Salisbury: the Great Fire of 1886. Join us downtown to learn all about it.

Slave Castles of Ghana: A Discussion

Lecture, Nabb Center Gallery
With Salisbury University's Tonya Price and George Washington University's Lee Ann Fujii
Wednesday, October 27, 7 p.m.
Located on the west coast of Africa, Ghana was the home to ports where great slave castles held thousands of Africans destined for the new world. Price and Fujii discuss their trips to the area.



African-American Traditions in Voice: Slave Spirituals and Gospel Music

Concert, Wicomico Room, Guerrieri University Center
Friday, October 29, 7 p.m.
Experience African-American music traditions and learn about their history. Featuring the Society for the Preservation of African-American Arts singers and the Salisbury University Gospel Choir.

'Tis the Season: Vintage Postcards in American Memory

Exhibit, Nabb Center Gallery
November 1-December 22
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1-4 p.m. or by appointment.
Vintage postcards intrigue and amaze with the variety, sense of humor, and insight they provide into the minds of the late Victorians. From the Nabb Research Center Collections, this exhibit features cards of the fall and winter holidays- Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas and the New Year. Sometimes somber, often sentimental and frequently irreverent, these delightful cards reflect the mood of the holidays and of the era.

Rebel Heels and Northern Scum: Maryland's Role in the Civil War

Lecture, Wicomico Room, Guerrieri University Center
With Dr. Thomas Clemens
Thursday, November 4, 7 p.m.
Historian Thomas G. Clemens highlights Maryland's pivotal role in our nation's most tragic conflict. This program is made possible by the Maryland Humanities Council.

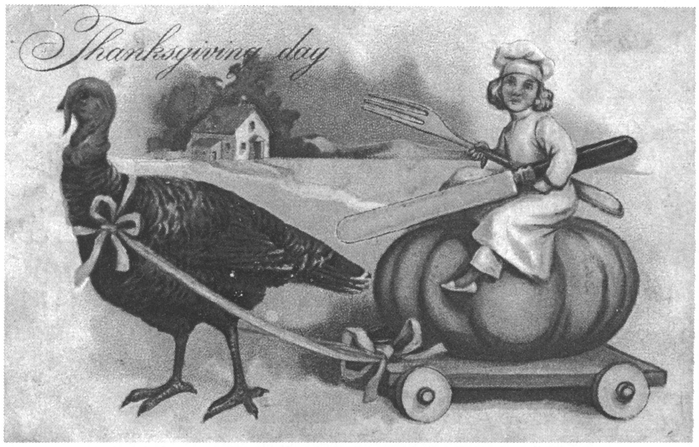
African-American Churches of the Eastern Shore

Lecture, Nabb Center Gallery
With Linda Duyer
Wednesday, December 8, 7 p.m.
Author and local historian Linda Duyer discusses vanished and surviving African-American churches of the Eastern Shore.

Galleries are open 1-4 p.m., Monday, Wednesday and Friday, or contact the Nabb Research Center at 410-543-6312 for an appointment. Exhibits are free and open to the public.

Holiday Closings

The Nabb Center closes for the holiday on
Monday, September 6
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, November 24-26
Thursday, December 23-Friday, December 31



'Tis the Season: Vintage Postcards in American Memory

Summer Hours

The Nabb Center welcomes researchers in the Reading Room library during our normal summer hours, Monday 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Tuesday-Friday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Please note that we are working diligently to update and standardize our records and the archival collections will not be available to researchers until August 30. This does not affect our Reading Room library or microfilm resources, which will continue to be available to all researchers.

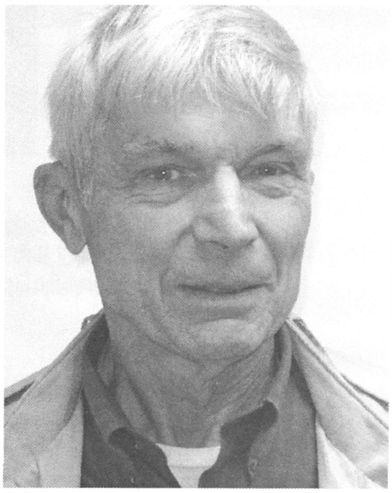
Volunteer Corner

Thank you to our volunteers, who collectively provide the Nabb Center with critical support including scanning, archival work, curating, docenting, research and research assistance, editing, staffing, outreach, and public programming. Without their dedication and hard work, much of what we do would not be possible.

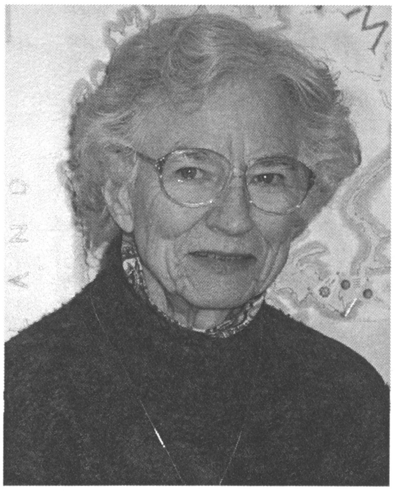
Carolyn Adkins

Page Austin

Joe Ballou

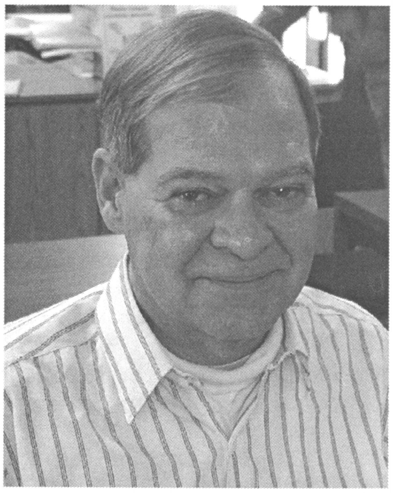


Polly Batchelder



Jefferson Boyer

Bill Collison

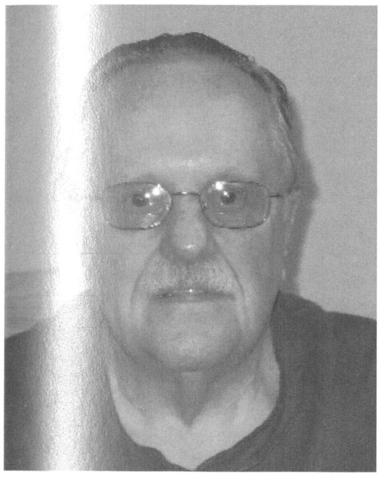


Linda Duyer

Mike Hitch

Catherine Hudson

Paul Marshner

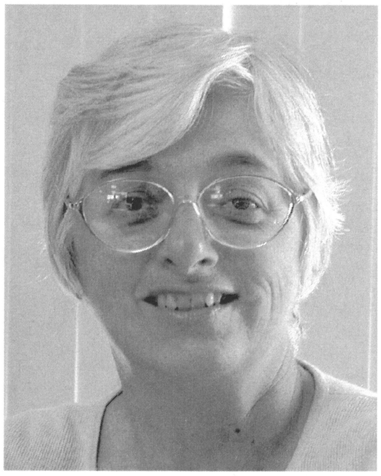


Kathy McIntyre

L. Paul Morris Jr.

Frances Sistrunk

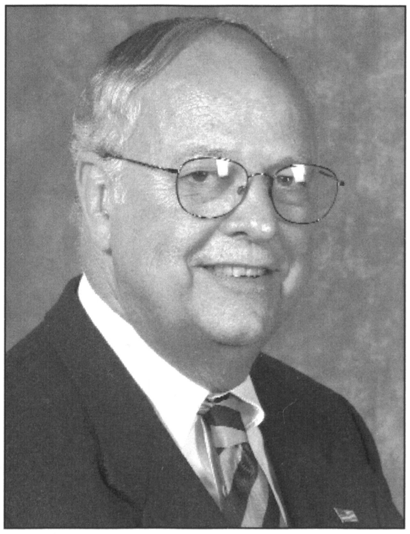
Pat Taylor



Sean Wenstrup

Jane West

Lloyd Whitehead



In Memoriam

In memory of Delegate Page D. Elmore
1939-2010, long-time member of the
Nabb Center's Board of Directors.